

THE  
LAW  
OF  
LIFE

ANNA  
M<sup>C</sup>CLURE  
SHOLL

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is novel was written by a niece  
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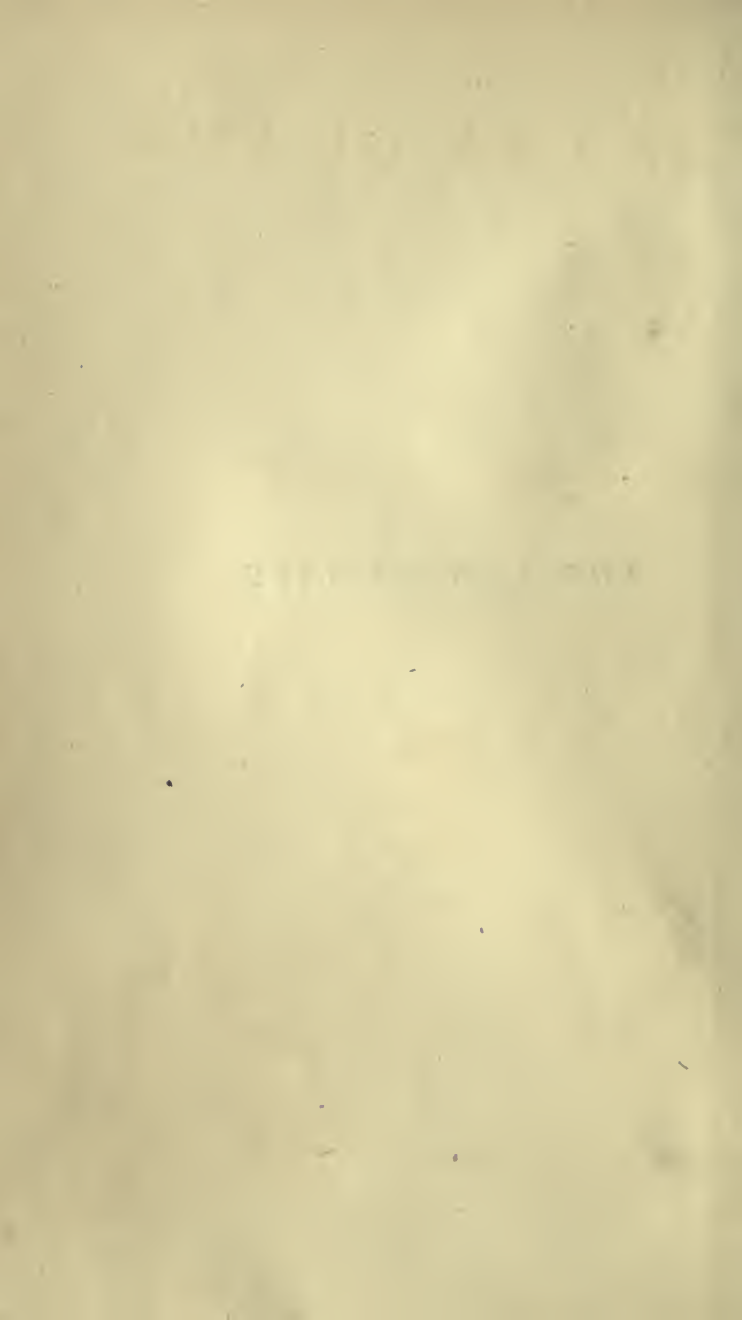
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**THE LAW OF LIFE**



# THE LAW OF LIFE

BY

ANNA McCLURE SHOLL



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NEW YORK - - - - MCMIII

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HENRY MORSE STEPHENS

*Published, August, 1903*

TO  
MY PARENTS

513688

TO VIRGIL  
AENEID

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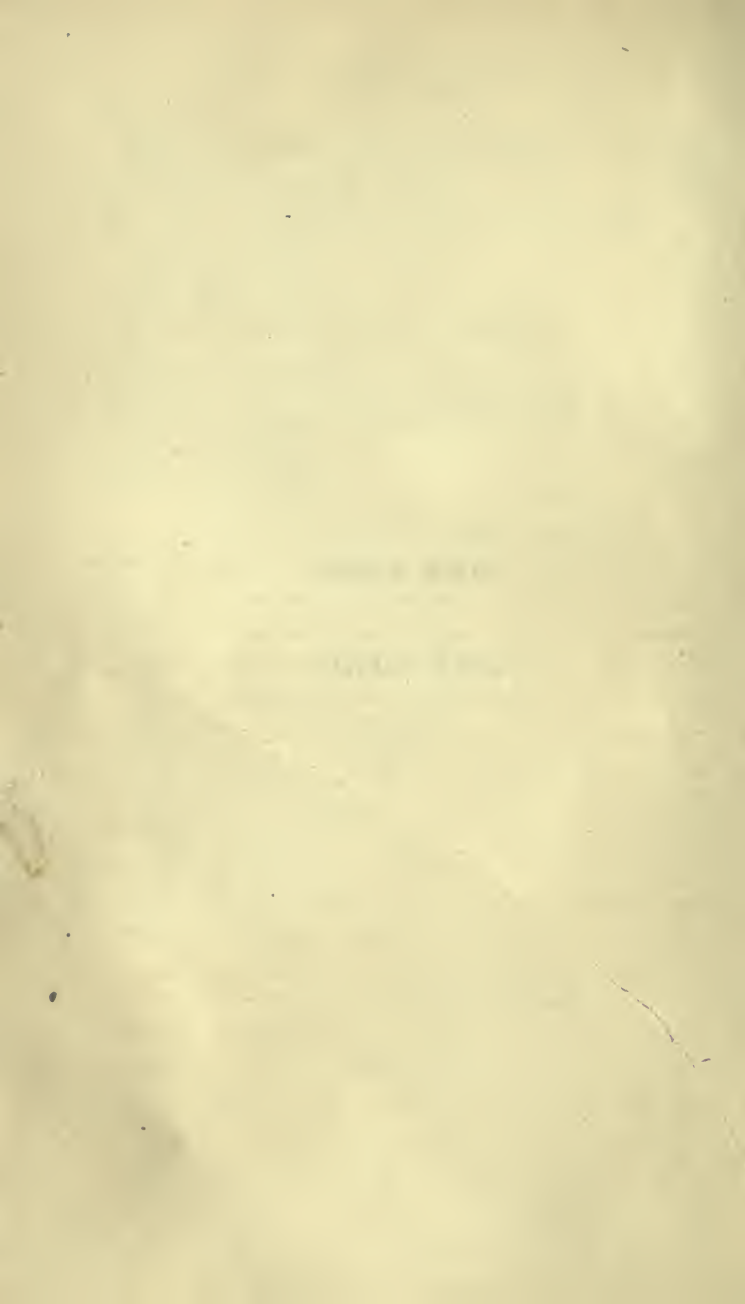
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**BOOK FIRST**

**THE GIRL.**



# THE LAW OF LIFE

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## CHAPTER I.

AVE! ALMA MATER.

HALLWORTH UNIVERSITY, endowed and erected for the higher education of young men and women by a self-made American citizen, was opening its doors to a large incoming class. The broad campus swarmed with freshmen, brave with youth, whose bearing was at once important and deprecating. Their pride of union with the great institution had already developed the sense of ownership, the unjaded imagination of the blossom period transforming these wide lawns, these halls and towers into a camping-ground of glory whence one might issue to subdue nations—or parents!

Mingling with the newcomers were the sophomores, the weight of a year's advantage heavy upon them, the tolerant juniors on the lookout for a tribute of humorous occurrences from these fledglings, the experienced and aloof seniors. An occasional impassive professor slipped in and out among the crowd.

A dispassionate observer watching these boys and girls, visible exponents of the charms and crudities of

## THE LAW OF LIFE

the transition period, might well have asked questions concerning the kind of education which they would receive in their four years' passage through the University. The little world of youth, with its buoyant egotism, its crude emotions, its vague but strong ambitions, might stumble upon knowledge not provided for in the University curriculum.

The thought brought a smile to the lips of a young man who stood on the porch of the library-building watching the passers-by, and, in his turn, much observed by them. He compelled attention not only because he was tall, well built and good looking, but for certain less tangible qualities, embodied memories, it would seem, of a world, if not more complex, yet larger than Hallworth University.

A freshman passed him, a country girl with round, pink cheeks, and an expression at once timid and eager. Seeing that she had dropped her handkerchief, he hurried after her, bowing slightly as he gave it to her with a grace of manner which seemed less physical than the result of a certain mental distinction. She looked at him in wonder, blushed, and forgot to thank him.

Turning from her he found himself face to face with the professor of mathematics whose Fellow he was to be that year, while studying for his doctorate. His air of indifference vanished at once. The two men shook hands warmly.

"When did you come, Waring?"

"Only this morning."

"I am delighted to see you—have only time for a handshake now; but dine with me to-night, can't you?"

## AVE! ALMA MATER

“Indeed, yes, with pleasure. I see you’re in a hurry. A problem?”

Dr. Penfold smiled. He pushed a gray lock from his brow with a characteristic gesture.

“Well, yes, I suppose you might call it so.” He hesitated, looked down, flicked some dust from the well-worn sleeve of his coat, and straightened his tie.

“The fact is I have a ward in Hallworth this year—the niece of my lifelong friend, Dale the historian. She arrived yesterday, or I believe she did. I was to have met her, but I totally forgot the obligation until five minutes ago. I am at work, you know, on my new book,” he added, with a note of apology in his voice.

Waring laughed.

“Dear Doctor, Hallworth is fortunate. You’ll forget to die.”

“To-night, then, at 6.30!”

He went on his way with what the students called his “spellbound” walk. His appearance was that of an eccentric but amiable scholar. Though only forty-five years of age, his hair was quite gray, his brow heavily lined, giving him the look of a man nearing sixty. His large, finely developed head was set upon a meager but not ill-proportioned body. His features, strong and well modeled, were softened by an innocent and abstracted expression. He had the impersonal air of the born mathematician. The shabbiness of his clothes gave the impression less of poverty than of absent-mindedness.

From the beginning of his career Amos Penfold’s eccentricities had been forgotten or pardoned because

## THE LAW OF LIFE

of the splendor of his gifts. His intellect had advanced from development to development, but his character seemed crystallized in youth. What he had been at twenty, shy, innocent, abstracted, with the sexlessness of the scholar, knowing no passion but that of herculean work, he was at forty-five. His twenty years at Hallworth had established his European reputation, had drawn to the young University those who might otherwise have distrusted its youth; but they brought no change in his manner of life. His monastic existence bore about it something of a medieval atmosphere amid the modern conditions of a new and growing college.

As Waring stood looking after Penfold with an expression half-amused, half-affectionate, a friendly hand was laid on his shoulder. Turning he saw Dutton, the assistant professor of chemistry, a man about his own age. Dutton's lean, brown face and kind eyes were boyishly eager. Linking an arm in Waring's he drew him down the steps of the porch.

"I haven't had a word with you yet. Come for a walk. Let's be freshmen for an hour."

"If one only could!"

They crossed the campus and soon came to the ravine which bounded the University lands on the north. The wild beauty of the gorge was scarcely impaired by the bridges which crossed it, and the power-houses built at the bases of its cliffs. On the bridge which overlooked one of the numerous waterfalls the two men paused. The trees which fringed the ravine were gorgeous in yellows and crimsons, thrown into relief by the dark green of the pines. At the end of a long perspective toward the west the valley opened, and the stream,



## AVE! ALMA MATER

which had pounded its way through the bed of the gorge and descended in showers of foam the last high fall, crept placidly across the plain to join the lake. Beyond the valley rose the sunset hills, etherealized with faint blue mists.

They looked long at the view. To Waring, as to the majority of the children of Hallworth, the charm of their Alma Mater was heightened by her natural setting, with its command of hills and valley, sky and lake. Every window of her buildings framed a picture, so that the cloud-shadows on the hills, the blue glints of the dancing water, the tremulous jewel-lights of morning and evening on distant landscapes, wove themselves into the most abstract subjects of the lecture-room like a tissue of gold threads.

"Does it look natural?" Dutton said.

"Just as it did nine years ago."

"Nine years! It can't be that long."

"Four at Hallworth—five in New York!"

"Those five years in New York should have made us strangers," Dutton said, wistfully. "You wrote so seldom—and told so little."

"I'm not a very good correspondent. Besides there was little to tell—five years of grub reporting—that was all."

"You seem to forget Cuba, that war correspondence that filled us so full of pride up here—pride that you were ours!"

"Oh, Cuba gave me my chance—the money to get back here."

Dutton hesitated.

"Waring, I never quite understood it. I mean those

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shocks that came to you just after your graduation. Of course I couldn't ask you—then, and the papers told such different tales.”

“It was simple enough. My father lost his fortune in a Wall street collapse. I had to turn in at once, and I got on a New York daily.”

“Well, Heaven be praised, you're back! But I never dreamed you'd come back—after the Cuban experience.”

“Why not?”

“I thought you wouldn't care to, after being in the main currents. I thought that Hallworth would seem too monastic—out of touch with life.”

Waring smiled.

“It might be possible that a University career rightly managed could be brought very close to life. They seem to know how to do that sort of thing in England.”

He hesitated, as if he wished to say more, but Dutton, gazing placidly down the ravine, did not look altogether in an understanding state of mind.

“Shall we go on—if we're going to walk?”

“Let's take the forest road,” Dutton said.

“I shall meet too many ghosts.”

“You'll probably meet half the Faculty at this hour.”

“You must tell me who's here and who's gone. During the war I lost track.”

The two men entered a pretty path which led along the edge of the ravine, back into the country.

“Shall I begin at the top? There's the new President, Hunt.”

“What of him?”



## AVE! ALMA MATER

“Fifty-five—unmarried—decanter—dogs—tobacco and scholarship enough to stock the Faculty. Hallworth snapped him up because Yale wanted him. They offered three thousand a year more.”

“Wealth bowling over aristocracy, as usual. But they’ll never have another Maturin. I heard he married a year or so before his death. I never thought he would do that.”

“Wait till you meet Mrs. Maturin,” Dutton said, a faint flush overspreading his face, “then you’ll know why.”

“She still lives here?”

“Yes, in the new house he built her just back of the campus. I’ll take you there.”

They passed a man whose face wore a heavy, frowning look. A bulldog trotted at his heels. To their greeting he returned a scant response.

“Leonard still has indigestion,” Dutton said, apologetically.

“So I see. Does Mrs. Leonard still give little consolation dinners to the instructors?”

“Poor soul, yes, and confides to each one how unhappy she is with her husband. He is writing a history of Russia, and between his researches and his indigestion he’s half crazy. I imagine he does treat her like a brute.”

“I’ve news, too,” Waring said, suddenly.

“What?”

“Penfold’s been made a guardian—has a girl ward in college this year.”

“Oh, Lord!” Dutton exclaimed; then he threw back his head and laughed gleefully.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

"Poor old Penfold, why, he needs a guardian himself! The girl will have the responsibility of herself and of him too."

A turn of the path brought them face to face with a young woman whom Waring knew well, Allaire Sordello, the daughter of the professor of psychology. In the five years which had elapsed since he had last seen her her face had remained in his memory with the distinctness of a cameo. She was of a delicate build, with clear, white skin, gray eyes, black lashes, perfectly chiselled features and a chin like the Madonna of Botticelli in the National Gallery. Her expression was singular, at once pathetic and bored. A faint light overspread her face as she recognized Waring. She held out her hand to him, at the same time nodding to Dutton.

"I heard that you were back to get a doctorate. I was disappointed."

"Disappointed?"

"I credited you with doing something more original after Cuba!"

"Spare me Cuba!" Waring said, with mock dismay.

"What would you have him do, Allaire?" Dutton asked.

She ignored the question and addressed herself to Waring.

"How can you come back for a stupid doctorate when you've been under fire—written war stories under fire? If I were a man I'd go on living—hunt tigers in Asia, or I'd look up the North Pole. People don't live in a university. Oh, I'm going to join the gypsies and take to the open road," she added, with fierce and

## AVE! ALMA MATER

helpless emphasis. "And I-advise you two to do the same."

Waring laughed.

"If we may be in the same band with you we'll go this minute," he said, but his gallantry was wasted. Allaire had turned on her heel and left them. Her movements were always quick and quiet, like those of a little forest animal.

"How she chafes under it all," Dutton said.

"I don't wonder; Hallworth in some ways is as mechanical as a monastery. She's right. They don't live here. Shall I turn scholar-gypsy, Dutton? No, I shall put on an evening-coat and dine with Penfold." He looked at his watch. "I must turn back or I'll be late."

## CHAPTER II.

### A NEW WORLD.

BARBARA DALE, Dr. Penfold's ward, sat in her room in the women's dormitory, her arms outspread upon her study table, her head resting upon a book. Her eyes were closed and through the thick black lashes tears were forcing their way. On this October afternoon, with the sights and sounds of Hallworth all about her, her thoughts were of her old home. She was oppressed with that most bitter form of homesickness, nostalgia for conditions which can never be again.

The very foundations of her life seemed to have been swept away on that night in June, when, clasping her hand to the end, her uncle had passed to some strange ceremony of reception in worlds denied to her. She had been left to him when three years old, a precious, embarrassing gift to the bachelor-scholar, the recluse of a New England village. But the comfort that fame had never brought him came to him eventually through her quaint childhood, and he gave her, in return, of his love and of his learning, putting the most winsome elements of his vast knowledge at her service.

This long childhood had ended at a wide and open grave, and she saw no bridge across it. In those first days after the funeral, when she had set his house in order, her love broke itself again and again upon familiar objects, made strange and awful by his going; his armchair, the worn, brown copies of Virgil they had read together that she might learn to love "Virgilius,

## A NEW WORLD

sweetest Father," the letter in his delicate, precise handwriting left unfinished on his desk, each thing hurt her until all memories were merged in intolerable pain.

A knock came at her door and a servant entered with her guardian's card. She had never met him, and she knew little of him except that he was a friend of her uncle's and a famous mathematician. She stopped a moment to bathe her red eyelids, then went down through the long halls slowly to gain courage.

In the drawing-room she found a gray-haired man deep in the pages of a review. He did not notice her entrance, and though she was sure he must be her guardian, she did not like to break in abruptly upon his evident absorption. She seated herself near him to wait until he finished the article. After what seemed to her a long time he closed the review dreamily and rose to go, being apparently unaware of her presence. She was so astonished at this complete detachment from time and place that he had reached the door of the drawing-room before she could collect herself, then she hastened after him.

"I beg pardon. Is this Dr. Penfold?"

He turned and looked at her with mild surprise.

"I am Dr. Penfold. What can I do for you?"

Barbara blushed.

"I am your ward."

He gazed at her an instant, then took both her hands in eager apology.

"Why, yes, yes, of course; I came here to call on you, didn't I! I must ask pardon. I was reading the Dean's article on the Vatican and France, and completely forgot where I was."



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Barbara smiled.

"I did not want to let you go without greeting you."

"How like your uncle you are, the same dark eyes. Ah! those good eyes of his!"

Barbara turned away her head an instant.

"I appreciate more than I can say," Dr. Penfold went on, "his trust in me in appointing me your guardian."

"You were his very dear friend."

"He befriended me in the days of my early struggles. I can't pay back the debt, but you must let me do what I can."

He spoke with an earnestness of manner which showed that some compelling memory had brought him out of his vagueness into the reality of the moment. He looked at her intently, as if to impress her physical characteristics upon his mind. Barbara was a tall, slender girl, with a clear white complexion, dark hair and gray eyes dark enough to seem black under the long lashes. Her mouth was firm but sweet; the chin, always slightly raised, was delicately modeled. Amos Penfold was not sensitive to beauty in women, and it would have required keener and more prophetic eyes than his to discern beauty in Barbara at that time. Hers was a face dependent for its charm upon the soul and its moods. She belonged to the class of women, whose development being slow and late, beauty may enrich at an age when their more precocious sisters are bankrupt.

"Do you like it here?" Dr. Penfold asked, abruptly.

"No, not yet."

"Too many girls."

"Yes. Hallworth seems like a little city."

## A NEW WORLD

“What course will you take?”

“The classical. I’m not well prepared for the others, but Uncle Robert taught me to read Greek and Latin.”

“Are you fond of study?”

Barbara hesitated.

“In an irregular way.”

“Browsing? Well, the culture of those who browse is not to be underrated. We all work too hard these days. We have not enough nonchalance toward learning.”

“Do you know,” Barbara said, “why my uncle wished me to come here? I am glad—to have—to have you for my guardian, but——” She paused with a look of trouble in her face.

“You did not want to come!”

“Not at all. I wanted to stay at the homestead. But it was his wish—so I came. He was too ill to tell me why.”

Dr. Penfold looked puzzled.

“How old are you, Barbara?”

“Just twenty.”

“In a year you will be your own mistress. One year will tell you whether you care enough for college life to complete the course. Perhaps Dr. Dale thought that you would forget sooner in new surroundings.”

“Forget!”

Her eyes were misty. Dr. Penfold took her hand.

“You must like us here. It is a young world, a good world.”

A smile lit up her face like a gleam of sudden sunlight.

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"It will be my fault if I do not like it."

"Now will you not come and take dinner with me? I am at the mercy of my housekeeper, old Mehitabel, but she will probably have something for us."

"I should be so glad to come, if you're sure I will not inconvenience you—not interfere with your work."

"I shall turn you over to Richard Waring if I must work."

"To Richard Waring?"

"My Fellow in mathematics. He will dine with us to-night."

On the way to his own house, Dr. Penfold pointed out the various buildings to her.

"They tell a story here," he said, "of an Oxonian who came over to occupy a chair in Hallworth. He paused on the edge of the campus, surveyed the buildings, and then took the next train back to New York, and the next steamer to Europe. I suppose it was a blow after Oxford, but he should have remembered how useful these structures are."

Barbara laughed.

"They look very grand to me, but then I've had nothing to compare them with."

"Hallworth does a great work, but she is young—too young for ivy."

He led her up a neat garden path to a small, compact house, gray in color. The square hall into which he ushered her was lined with books, and with casts from the frieze of the Parthenon. Something in the quiet, Puritanical aspect of the place reminded Barbara of her old home.

Dr. Penfold, who had been making a conscious



## A NEW WORLD

effort to keep his mind upon his ward and the courtesies due her, now seemed to come under the spell of his own house. He glanced up the stairs at his study door, and seemed about to go thither, though with an apologetic countenance, as if under the command of an irresistible force. Barbara saw the glances and understood them. She begged him to leave her to entertain herself.

The parlor was a plain, old-fashioned room, with ancient mahogany furniture placed stiffly against the wall, beneath chilly steel-engravings of Washington, of Franklin and of Lincoln. The windows were curtainless, the shades being pulled down to an even length, as if by a spinster hand. A bookcase containing a desk occupied one corner. Barbara, examining the titles of the books, found them to be the keepsakes and volumes of mild sentimental poetry with which an earlier generation fed its hunger for romance. Clearly this quaint library had belonged to Dr. Penfold's mother or grandmother.

A tall, gaunt woman of middle age entered and lit the wood fire on the hearth. Barbara drew up a chair and watched the flames leap and curl. She wanted no better entertainment.

She was leaning forward, her elbows on her knee and her chin resting on the palms of her hands, when Mehitabel ushered Waring into the parlor. He paused a moment on the threshold, seeing the black figure like a shadow in the flood of rosy light. She raised her head with an absorbed look; then as he came forward she rose and faced him, a slim, nun-like figure in her black gown.

Waring liked to form instantaneous impressions of

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women and then to put these impressions to gradual proof. He thought now as he looked into Barbara's face:

"She spells New England—would rather be conscientious than charming."

She gave him her hand with the straightforward gesture of a lad.

"You are Mr. Waring? Dr. Penfold is in his study."

She stood in hesitation, as if expecting he would leave her. Waring was amused.

"May I stay here? If Dr. Penfold is working, an introduction would be necessary."

Barbara smiled, remembering her own experience.

"He is so absent-minded, you know. There's a story that in his youth—he was really young, once—he proposed to a girl and she accepted him. Then he became absorbed in a mathematical problem and completely forgot her existence. When he emerged she had married some one else."

A light of humor shone for a moment in Barbara's eyes. Then she drew her straight dark brows together in a slight frown.

"Ought we to talk about him in his own house?" she said, then caught her breath at the sound of her words.

Waring smiled. His smile had a sweetness in it which hurt Barbara more than a rebuke.

"Not unless we really like him. I can't tell you how he's beloved here. I chose to take my doctorate in mathematics so I could be associated with him this year."

He looked at her with new interest. He had thought

## A NEW WORLD

her rigid and he found her impulsive. Waring was grateful to women for surprising him. There was a tradition at Hallworth that when a senior he had broken an engagement because the girl always did and said the expected thing.

Barbara's impulsive speech had stranded her in silence. From silence she passed to an irrelevant question.

"Does work begin on Monday?"

"Yes. Are you anxious to begin?"

"I shall be glad to work—yes."

Waring leaned forward and stirred the fire. The flames lit up his handsome, careless face.

"Don't study too hard. It isn't worth it!"

"What else is there to do?" Barbara asked.

Waring laughed.

"A thousand things, dances and fraternity suppers, and other functions. You'll be rushed, as they call it, by all four of your fraternities."

"Fraternities?"

"Is it possible you don't know what they are?"

She shook her head.

"Let me enlighten you. There are secret societies of young ladies, presumably the flowers of our flock. A new member pledges herself to love her twenty-one sisters, to have twenty-one bosom friends, and to regard all outsiders as—well—cats!"

"Twenty-one bosom friends!" Barbara repeated, with vague alarm.

"Or nineteen, as the case may be."

"But for what object?"

"A good time and rivalries with the other fraternities."

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"I do not think I should care to join—at least not this year," she added, with an unconscious glance at her black gown.

"But they will ask you to teas and things, and send you flowers," Waring said, amused by her prophetic resentment of the gregarious state.

"They do not know of my existence."

"Yes, they do—as Dr. Penfold's ward. Aside from other considerations, students having social connections with the Faculty are considered valuable prey."

"You are laughing at me," Barbara said gravely.

"Indeed, no! I am laughing at them."

"Yet you advise me to do as they do."

"Not at all. I only said don't study too hard, it isn't worth it."

"What is worth it?"

They looked across at each other and Waring smiled.

"I haven't yet found out. What do you think?"

She shook her head.

"I might have told you my theories—a year ago. I have none now."

A look of sympathy stole into Waring's face.

"I was homesick once," he said, "for a home I never had. So I adopted Hallworth."

"Must I adopt Hallworth?"

"You'll want to later on when you know your Alma Mater."

She looked puzzled.

"I don't think I could ever love an institution."

Waring was silent for a moment. Then he said:

"You must love Hallworth. We must show you how."

## A NEW WORLD

Dinner was a simple function. The appointments, the manner of serving reminded Barbara of her old home. She felt at her ease, as if in an atmosphere wholly familiar. For the time being the embarrassing, youthful world of Hallworth was shut out. Waring she did not include in this world, though she could not have told in what the difference lay.

During the dinner he talked chiefly with Dr. Penfold, only addressing her enough to make her feel that she was included in the conversation, which drifted into a discussion of a recent work on evolution, and its significance in the religious life of the age. Barbara listened with silent, impersonal interest. From early childhood her uncle had taught her his own creed, the obligation of facing without fear the bleakest perspectives of the universe. But this intellectual acquaintance with that boundless region beyond the paddock of orthodoxy was combined in her with a certain emotional and youthful longing for the definite and concrete.

This longing was upon her now as Waring discussed the book in question, choosing his vocabulary with a fine sense of delicate distinctions. She wondered if he would say something to throw light.

Suddenly Dr. Penfold interrupted him.

"We are not saying anything, Miss Dale—Barbara—that would offend you—seem strange to you——?"

"Oh, I beg your pardon. Are you a——?" Waring hesitated.

"No, I have read the book," she answered, quietly, "And the one that went before."

He looked at her in amazement. The child-likeness of her manner seemed difficult to reconcile with the ma-



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turity of thought which acquaintance with such works implied.

"I read them with my uncle," she explained, seeing the questions in Waring's eyes.

"What did you think of them?"

"They made me feel lonely," she answered, simply.

Waring's face lit up with appreciation.

"How lonely we are in these days! And the orthodox think we're insolent over our liberty."

Dr. Penfold looked at Barbara with a kindly expression.

"It is a big universe to face," he said, as if speaking to a child; "but never mind, my dear, we shiverers in the outer darkness will earn our orthodoxy for a snug old age."

"Meanwhile?" said Waring, looking at Barbara, with the hope of drawing her out.

He expected that, like other young ladies acquainted with the initiated thought of the time in matters religious, she would launch upon the didactics of doubt. She did not answer him at once, and he repeated the question.

"And meanwhile——?"

"One can try to be good," she said in a low voice, but her accent made the answer tentative.

Waring felt that he should like her—she had surprised him twice.

After dinner two members of the Faculty dropped in, Professor Goodwin, who shook hands with Barbara, and addressed her as if she were a little girl; and a younger man, who immediately drew Waring into close conversation on some political question with which she was not

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familiar. They all asked her permission to smoke when Dr. Penfold passed a box of cigars, and then they forgot her existence—with the exception of Waring. He looked across at her from time to time while Joyce was talking to him, and once or twice he addressed a remark to her. Feeling that she was on his mind, she took up a book lying on the table near her. She had read a page or two when Waring came over to her.

“What are you reading? Ah, I see! the story of Paolo and Francesca. Are you fond of Dante?”

“I don’t know him well.”

He took the book gently from her.

“He is not cheerful when one is homesick. May I ask if you will go to the football match with me next Tuesday?”



### CHAPTER III.

#### “UNDER AN ACADEMIC STAR.”

THE University of which Barbara had become a member was not, like Harvard and Yale, an institution contemporary throughout its history with the gestation, birth and development of the American people, but belonged to the generation of colleges founded after the Civil War. What it lacked in pedigree it made up in fortune, being similar in this respect to many good Americans.

Its beginnings had been humble. John Hallworth, its founder, possessed only a modest fortune according to twentieth century standards, but his nature was rich in that pure and poetical faith in the future which generations before had shone like a star to pilgrim eyes above the dark forests of the New World. His ideal of a university, as a place where any person might find instruction in any study, was at once that of a poet and a man of affairs. He trusted to the strength of this ideal to aid the growth of Hallworth, and as the solidest of all foundations he endowed his institution with land. Out of the soil some of the sons of Hallworth should always derive their sustenance and their inspiration, though others followed Plato and Dante to the farthest star.

The founder's knowledge of men, coupled with a far-seeing appreciation of the kind of leadership demanded by a complex educational plant in a commercial country, led him to choose as first President of the University a diplomat who was also a scholar of vast and

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varied attainments. He, in his turn, gathered about him a well-selected Faculty, whose strenuous services to Hallworth counterbalanced the crime of its extreme youth. The campus was laid out with a generosity of prophetic vision common in the foundation of Western towns. The American faith in the future transformed the bleak field, with its two lonely buildings, into a leading university of the East.

The President, with his diplomatic experience and knowledge of affairs, was the first to perceive the crudities and possibilities of the new organization. He realized that in the hurry and rush of a commercial country the slow developments of Europe were neither possible nor desirable; that Oxford, mellow with age and warm with the faith of bygone centuries, would be an anachronism and a stumbling-block in the United States. He knew the necessity of a university made out of whole cloth, but he was determined that the cut of the cloth should be correct and liberal enough to fit all possible conditions.

At the period when Barbara entered Hallworth it had fully attained its urbane maturity, distributing favors to upward of three thousand students, and esteeming no trouble too much to take for its wards, whether keeping the buildings at a certain temperature or importing Assyrian remains and doubtful Botticellis for their benefit. Something material, opulent, lavish, was prominent through the entire organization, yet the spirit of the place linked it directly to that earlier Hallworth which made its fledglings comfortable neither in body nor in soul. The machine-shops, the dairy, the agricultural buildings, still bound its sons to the soil.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

Certain portions of the vast library still mapped out that journey to the stars; while underneath all its enterprises was a spirit of democracy which strove to uphold the purest American ideals, making of education a service, of culture a wider sympathy with humanity and its needs. If certain of its well-wishers mistrusted the power which its rapid accumulation of wealth placed in its hands, the policy of the University had, as yet, given them no definite cause for alarm.

Barbara, just emerged from the seclusion of a quiet New England village, had no idea that the higher education was so popular! All young America seemed to have arrived upon that broad campus with a whoop of joy, and to have taken assured possession. The downy things swarmed in the library and fluttered about the librarians. They overran the lecture-rooms, the laboratories, the museums. They inspected the chapel and the bronze memorial tablets with a happy sense that to be a live freshman was infinitely better than to be a dead professor, however honored. If these freshmen had a tinge of awe it vanished when they learned that they had passed the entrance examinations. They, too, joined then in the general scramble and exultation over the spoils, with much parade of class-spirit and a liberal use of red paint on fence and tree and rock, lest the University should be unmindful that they had arrived.

As for Barbara, she was scarcely aware that she belonged to a class. Her social instincts, long dormant through her manner of living, had not yet had time to respond to the manifestations of young life about her. But she herself was not unobserved by the circles in Stafford Hall, the women's dormitory. True to War-

## “UNDER AN ACADEMIC STAR”

ing's prophecy, several of the fraternity girls had called upon her, and one of them had invited her to afternoon tea in her rooms on the following Monday.

With the exception of the few hours spent at Dr. Penfold's the intervening days were gray enough, and she was glad when Monday morning came, with its promise of work and routine. Work might at least numb the pain of her homesickness and quiet her restless spirit. As she stepped out on the campus a half-hour before the first lecture, a sense of hope came to her, the mere physical response, perhaps, to the beauty of the day. In the clear air of a crisp October morning the towers of the University stood out against the dazzling blue sky. The lake in the distance lay like a blue gem at the base of the hills. The chimes were ringing. Throngs of students were walking briskly up the avenue; all was movement, animation, enterprise. Barbara hurried along with the rest, her eyes less occupied with her companions than with the lovely autumn scenery. The blood danced in her veins. A keen desire filled her to run away and go for a ramble over those beautiful hills.

In front of the library her attention was brought back to her immediate surroundings by a little crowd standing about a young man who bore himself like a conscious hero.

“Who is he?” Barbara asked a girl standing by.

“Why, don't you know?” she answered, raising her eyebrows. “That's Griggs, the crack football player. He's done more for Hallworth than all the Faculty put together.”

Barbara looked curiously at this ornament to a great institution, a shaggy cub with a mass of dark, unkempt



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hair, from under which his small, keen eyes peered forth like a terrier's. His sweater, with an enormous H upon it, came up in a roll about his stocky neck. The faces of those about him expressed an almost reverential joy in the possession of him. Barbara went on her way puzzled. Her old ideas of academic life as a peaceful, somewhat sublimated existence were being rapidly swept away by a flood of new impressions. Did the meek and visionary student belong only in the pages of some ancient black-letter? A certain youthful gaiety of spirit seemed so far the predominant element at Hallworth.

Monroe Hall, where her first hour was to be, formed the centre of a group of buildings at the extreme end of the campus. Arriving there she inquired her way to the junior Latin. Her guide piloted her to a large room on the topmost story, already half-filled with students. The seats, ranged in amphitheater fashion, commanded a fine view of the lake. After she had found a place and had time to look about her, she recognized among the students two or three of the girls who had called upon her. They flashed her friendly glances of recognition, then resumed the somewhat stately impersonal manner which was their conventional bearing in the classroom.

The men students, less self-conscious, talked, lounged or fingered their note-books. Suddenly the hum of voices ceased, as, on the stroke of the clock, a young man of businesslike bearing stepped briskly up to the desk on the platform.

"Young ladies and gentlemen, we will begin our term's work by an examination of your ease in sight translation. Warden, will you please distribute these Virgils, while I call the roll?"

## “UNDER AN ACADEMIC STAR”

He spoke with a crisp intonation which acted on the class like a sudden draft of cold air. They all sat up and looked uncomfortable. The faces of some expressed that vague hostility which is never wholly absent from the moral atmosphere when a number of people are gathered together with malice prepense for the purpose of education.

“Mr. Able, second book, line 772; begin, if you please, read till I tell you to stop, then go back and translate.”

Mr. Able found the place, gulped, and began dismally.

“*Infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbra Crusæ*,” he went on, in sad monotony of cadence, until he was told to stop.

“Now translate, if you please.”

Mr. Able was seized with a fit of coughing. When he began it was to plough through each sentence as if it had been a quagmire.

“*Execrable*,” said the professor, cutting short the performance.

Mr. Able’s face brightened with exquisite relief. Barbara wondered whether he had heard the word which ended his sufferings.

“Mr. Jones, will you go on?”

Mr. Jones went on with a martyr air which would have seemed funny to Barbara if she had not felt such sympathy for him.

“Enough, Mr. Jones. Miss Linsdale, will you proceed?”

Miss Linsdale proceeded. The class was beginning to breathe easier. It leaned back in its seat, and meta-

## THE LAW OF LIFE

phorically stretched its legs. Three or four furtively looked at their watches. Others counted noses. Barbara, losing interest in the incomparable poet, as interpreted by the youth of Hallworth, let her gaze wander to the lake. A breeze had sprung up, covering its surface with dainty whitecaps. She longed to escape from the close, steam-heated room and go for a ramble along its banks.

"Miss Dale, will you proceed as I direct?"

The crisp voice was like a thunderclap. She looked up to find the professor's keen blue eyes fixed upon her, and not only his, but the eyes of all the class. The color rushed to her face. For a moment she was dumb with embarrassment, then her pride came to her rescue.

"The sixth book, please—line 883."

She braced herself to the ordeal and found the place. The passage was the pathetic one beginning "Tu Marcellus eris." She had often read it to her uncle, its melancholy beauty making its own appeal to her dreaming youth. A surge of memories swept over her. The bald, grammatical Virgil of the class exercise disappeared. In his place came the poet, with his tender and golden grace, his wistfulness, his sense of the tears falling through the mists of the world.

When she began she could scarcely control her voice, then the magic of the sonorous Latin words took hold of her, and she gave them their full poetic value.

The professor looked at her curiously. He was not accustomed to hear Latin read with such grace of intonation by a student. The class drew its first long breath. It never basked until the young man at the desk had been appeased. It was grateful to Barbara,



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but its gratitude was not without an element of resentment.

She began her translation with quiet ease, and as she went on she found herself searching her spirit for true words to express the pathos and haunting beauty of the passage. She forgot the class. She was reading to one dead. The professor, accustomed to the rigidity of the public-school-drilled mind, looked at her in amazement; then, being a scholar as well as a teacher, leaned back in his chair and listened with full contentment. This insignificant girl had created a golden atmosphere about the hackneyed words.

When she had finished, he said:

“You are prepared for senior work, Miss Dale. Will you kindly remain after the hour?”

Barbara became aware then that three or four men were scowling at her, and she overheard a masculine voice behind her saying:

“A damned co-ed, as usual!”

The shock of this comment was tempered by her relief at having come through her ordeal, but she cast a questioning look toward the two girls she knew. They were both gazing straight before them with a curious smile, which affected Barbara more than the rough words she had overheard. She wondered if, unwittingly, she had made herself conspicuous, and her cheeks burned. One of the two girls was to be her hostess that afternoon. She resolved to ask her plainly if she had done something not usual and not approved.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE EMPEROR.

BARBARA'S hostess at the afternoon tea was a junior and one of the most popular women in the University. Her room was eloquent of this popularity. Barbara wondered how study could be possible in such surroundings. The hard daylight was softened by sash curtains of dull yellow silk, and window draperies of Persian stuffs. Divans covered with rugs and heaped with cushions filled up the corners. The walls were hung with photographs of the campus, of the crews, of the teams, of the class. Flags and cotillon favors were prominent. A tea-table bearing tiny cups of pretentious china, silver candlesticks with pink-shaded candles and a bowl of violets was placed near one of the divans.

The hostess, Helena Dare, the "Emperor," as her friends called her, presided over the tea-table. She introduced Barbara to the other members of the fraternity, who studied her as they talked to her. After an interval some one piloted her to a divan and piled cushions at her back. To the practiced eye of her hostess Barbara suffered no disadvantage from comparison with the other young girls upon show. The modernity of the room emphasized a certain quaintness in her appearance, which, so far from being rustic, witnessed to an aristocratic seclusion from the world. The simplicity of her bearing, added to an indifference quite discernible in her attitude, might if brought to the proper pitch form the essence of a society manner. The Emperor,

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accustomed to the nervous shyness of the average freshman, was amused and challenged by this new type.

Barbara, on her part, was attracted by her hostess's ease and grace. She stole glances at her from time to time until she had made a mental picture of her physical characteristics. The Emperor was of a tall, graceful figure. Her hair and large, impenetrable eyes were dark, her face rounded, her features strong rather than delicate, her skin clear and pale. Her face had a curious sameness of expression, as if she wore a mask. She bore herself with a certain imperiousness which marked the leader, but she knew how to be gracious.

A younger girl, who introduced herself as Elizabeth King, brought Barbara a cup of tea and then sat down beside her.

"How do you like Hallworth?" she asked, smiling.

"It is a very big place. I suppose one can only know it gradually. I think I shall like it," she answered, not wishing to commit herself until she had attained the proper pitch of enthusiasm.

"Oh, you will like it, and you are fortunate in being a ward of the Faculty, so to speak. Have you known Dr. Penfold long?"

"I never met him until I came here."

"He's an old darling, lives in the clouds, forgets to eat and sleep, doesn't care for society—that's a pity, you know, for he could take you to Faculty functions."

"I shall not—go out much this year."

Elizabeth touched Barbara's hand softly.

"Of course not," she said, "your loss is too recent. Forgive me." There was something dainty, gentle and caressing in her manner.

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Barbara was becoming aware of her exceeding prettiness. She had abundant, fair, brown hair, darker brows, and blue eyes of forget-me-not hue. Her self-possession was not a kind which embarrasses other people.

"Have you met Dr. Penfold's fellow, Mr. Waring?" she asked.

"Yes; do you know him?"

"No, but my sister did. He's one of the traditions of Hallworth."

"He must have been very popular—from what I've heard."

"Oh, he was—he was such an enigma, you know—one of those non-committal characters."

Barbara did not quite understand, but she said nothing. She was not only astonished by the ease with which these young girls carried on a conversation, but puzzled by the language they used. They seemed to avoid straightforward and explicit statements. Some of the terms they employed were unfamiliar, as of a refined and esoteric slang.

Her hostess approached her after a time, and said in a low voice:

"Stay after the others go. I have had no chance to see you, and I should like a little chat with you."

"I shall ask her about this morning," Barbara thought.

Elizabeth King left her to offer tea to some other guests. A certain formality seemed the ruling spirit of the occasion. College girls who have become socially self-conscious are, as a rule, extremely conventional. The women of Hallworth, having passed through the

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eccentric period, as vestals of the higher education, were now eager to emphasize the fact that they were women of the world first and students afterward. Their four fraternities, the storm-centers of social aspirations, had for their avowed objects to set the example of dressing in the mode, to curb originality and to mold freshmen into girls whose clothes and conduct would be irreproachable from a social standpoint. At this afternoon tea, to which none but promising members of the entering class had been invited, the work of regeneration was already being begun. The fraternity's representatives, with suave words and ineffable little marks of favor, were wooing susceptible freshmen over cups of tea and offerings of sugar wafers. Barbara, watching them, wondered if they could really mean all they said and did.

In obedience to the wish of her hostess, she remained until the last guest had taken her departure. Then the Emperor took a seat beside her and poured out a cup of tea.

"You were charming to wait for me. You must have a cup of tea with me. Do you like violets?"

She drew a bunch from a bowl, dried the stems daintily with her handkerchief, and leaning over Barbara, pinned them on the waist of her dress. Her movements were slow, quiet and graceful, her manner distinguished by that personal quality which gives significance to the slightest word or action. Barbara was perplexed. This handsome, popular girl could not be so suddenly interested in her for her own sake. She thought of Waring's jesting prophecies. Yet the friendliness, though assumed, was, in a sense, comforting.



## THE LAW OF LIFE

Since her uncle's death she had known the bleakness of a grief unshared by others. This delicate warmth of attention and interest made her feel as if she had stepped for a moment out of the cold and windy night into a sheltered place. She leaned back against the cushions and put her cheek down to the violets.

"They are lovely, but it seems wrong to wear them; they die so soon."

"I like to watch them die," said the Emperor; "I never care for flowers out of doors—only in my rooms."

"And I care most for them in the garden—with the sun upon them."

"You have lived a great deal in the open air," her hostess said.

"Yes; how did you know?"

"You are natural and simple."

Barbara blushed. She was not accustomed to personal remarks.

"And you have lived a good deal among books," the Emperor went on, stirring her tea, her dark eyes fixed on her guest's face.

"Yes."

"And you know them better than you do people."

Barbara sat up straight and looked uncomfortable.

The manner of her hostess changed at once.

"I imagine that when one is very young, and when one is very old, one prefers books to people—before you know much of life and after you know it all."

Her voice was caressing, and Barbara's resentment faded.

"I have always led a very quiet life," she said; "I never had the opportunity to meet many people."

## THE EMPEROR

"But you will here. You must let me have the pleasure of introducing you."

"Perhaps," Barbara said, feeling a vague annoyance over this patronage which she could not wholly understand, and then, fearing she had been rude, she added: "You see, I could not go out very much this year."

The Emperor looked amused. She was not accustomed to refusals from freshmen, especially country-bred freshmen. The sensation which Barbara's indifference aroused was not wholly unpleasing to her. She liked to overcome difficulties.

"When you know me better—of course," she said, gently, "and wish it—but only unless you wish. We ought to be friends—I too," she paused, "was once a freshman."

"Is it such a crime to be a freshman?" Barbara said, resenting not so much her hostess's words as the cynical accent in them. She felt quite capable at that moment of taking care of herself.

"Ah, no! but it has its perils at Hallworth."

"Perils? I cannot see them," Barbara answered, her tongue suddenly loosened. "One comes here, one goes to class, one does one's work. It seems very simple—to me."

"And you actually think that is all of it?" her hostess said, drawing a rose from a bowl and passing it and repassing it across her lips. "There is the social life—the dances."

"I do not dance."

"The receptions—the plays," the Emperor went on, not noticing the interruption, "the class functions.



## THE LAW OF LIFE

You are one of a class, you know, and you have duties and obligations. Hallworth is, in a sense, at your mercy."

"I should think one could best serve Hallworth by working hard."

The Emperor smiled.

"But we don't cease to be men and women when we come, and the professors are human."

Barbara sat up straight, as she always did when she was thinking. This conversation, so in accord with the strange impressions of the entire day, was opening a new world to her. A backward light was thrown upon her experience in the lecture-room.

"Tell me," she said slowly, "why did they scowl at me for my translation of Virgil this morning? And why did you smile?"

The Emperor tore off a rose-petal.

"Did you see me smile? The translation was brilliant, so brilliant as to be conspicuous—and we avoid that here."

"But I did not mean it to be brilliant—only true."

"No; but it is our policy to hide our cleverness, like a rapier under chiffon ruffles. We have more power so, without the men suspecting it."

"It is for their benefit, then!"

"You must take them into account, you know. You will have to, sooner or later in your life."

The soft, amused voice, with its ironical accent, stirred Barbara even more than the words. She turned her face away lest the sensation of tears should suddenly become visible. She wanted to rise and go, but she did not know how.

## THE EMPEROR

"We all saw your soul this morning," her hostess went on, putting into her voice delicate, caressing inflections; "a beautiful soul, tender, white, untried, full of poetic enthusiasm—much too fine and true to be exposed to the gaze of those cubs. You see what I mean?"

"I was not thinking of them," Barbara said, brokenly.

"I know," the Emperor said, with a gentleness which the younger girl found hard to resist. Fearing she knew not what self-revelation, she still kept her face turned away.

The Emperor took her hands.

"Won't you look at me? Ah, I have hurt you!"

"No."

"No?"

For answer again, Barbara rose to her feet. Her hostess leaned back among the cushions, and regarded her with a look of amusement, not wholly unsympathetic.

"You will come to see me again?" she said.

"Thank you," Barbara answered; then she added with dignity: "I thank you for telling me these things. I should not wish to make mistakes."

The Emperor smiled.

"May I hope you will come again?—because I've hurt you!—however unwillingly."

Her voice thrilled Barbara. The younger girl had never heard a voice quite like it in its suggestion of mystery.

"Because you have hurt me!" she answered, her eyes wide with astonishment.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

“Why not! It is one of our strange human ways—and how shall I know that you forgive me—unless you return!”

Her dark eyes were roguish. Barbara suddenly felt very young, and small and helpless. The mockery of her hostess's manner was as intangible as a faint perfume.

“There is nothing to forgive,” she said; “that is, if I needed the lesson.”

The Emperor fingered the petals in her lap. She had picked the rose to pieces.

When Barbara left her hostess a weight of self-consciousness was heavy upon her. Their conversation had aroused certain questions in her mind, as strange as they seemed unanswerable. That she should have duties and obligations toward a large number of people was a new idea to her. By training, and, to a degree, by temperament, she belonged to that class of persons who shrink from the gregarious mode of existence, preferring the detachments of the individual life. But though a solitary soul, she was too human not to wish to please those with whom she was to be thrown daily. She was not at all sure, however, that she knew how to do what was expected of her.

That same night she was endeavoring to forget her bewilderments in study when a light knock came at her door, and the Emperor herself entered, gorgeous as a tropical flower in a gown of red. She was at Barbara's side in a moment with a hand laid gently on her shoulder.

“No, don't get up. I see you're deep in Greek. Will you go with me to the football-match to-morrow?”

## THE EMPEROR

"I am going with Mr. Waring," Barbara said literally. "He invited me last week."

The Emperor fixed her big, black eyes steadily a moment on the younger girl's face."

"You know Mr. Waring, then!"

"I met him at my guardian's."

"I am sorry I am too late. I should have asked you last week. But you don't suggest football, only things poetical and mystic."

She lifted a stray lock from Barbara's forehead with the lightest possible touch.

"Are you going to like us here?"

"I want to."

"Ah, that is good!—that is a long step in the right direction. We feel that it is quite imperative that you should like us."

Barbara wondered. Was this strange girl laughing at her again? But the Emperor looked serious.

"You'll have to like us before you can like Hallworth! We are Hallworth, you know; or at least one half of it."

"What's the other half?"

"The Faculty."

"I don't know where to begin in my liking," Barbara said, helplessly, "it's all so big!"

"Begin with me," said the Emperor. Then she swept out of the room, leaving a trail of faint laughter behind her.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE WORLD OF YOUTH.

BARBARA greeted Waring next day with a friendliness which reconciled him to her quaint appearance. She flushed with pleasure when he handed her a bunch of violets tied up with the Hallworth colors, white and green. The novelty of this world into which she had been ushered was beginning to stir her blood.

On the way to Washington Field, the official playground of the University, he interpreted certain mysteries to her. For the past fifteen years Hallworth had been pushing its way to the front in athletics, biding its time, and bearing with more or less composure the sneers of Harvard and Yale against an "agricultural, one-horse college." Now Hallworth had overtaken these formidable rivals. The football and baseball teams were in the first rank, and the crew itself was "ahead of the first," as Waring expressed it. For the welfare of the crew, he gravely explained, the students would rejoice to make a holocaust of the whole University, including the famous Dante collection. The coach, Hudnut, a man of infinite patience and tried skill, resembled Fra Angelico's saints in that he was perpetually clothed in a nimbus of glory. Presidents might come and go, professorial chairs might totter, and the citadels of learning reel to their fall, but Hudnut survived all shocks of fortune.

"Yale and Harvard are pricking up their ears,"



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Waring said to Barbara. "They are watching Hallworth as a terrier does a rat."

Barbara made no comment on this intellectual exercise of two great universities. She was more interested in Waring himself. She would have liked to question him; to know just what he thought on a variety of subjects.

He was interrupted by their changing cars. A number of trolleys stood at the junction, packed with people on their way to the Field. From the platforms slim, tanned youths in sweaters hung gracefully. They cried "Hall—Hall—Hall—I call—I call—I call Hallworth," at intervals, and some of them further relieved their feelings by pounding each other. Though the majority of them belonged to the genus cub, they displayed beneath their college manner the characteristics of the great American middle class, its independence, its democratic ease, its keen sense of humor, its brisk, business-like attention to the affair of the moment; and under its surface-enthusiasm, its nonchalance, its well-nigh Olympian indifference.

"Everybody goes," Waring said to Barbara, as he tucked her into a corner of the platform. "Even the Wife of the Faculty."

Some one, recognizing him as a quondam hero of the football team, inquired in hoarse tones what was the matter with Waring, upon which a score of lusty throats roared out that he was all right. Barbara felt a certain pride of him stir within her, as of some comrade who had earned honors.

The car soon left the town behind and entered flat, green, spongy meadows. In the distance the lake ap-

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peared to be brimming over. To Waring, Washington Field swarmed with ghosts. He remembered great games of old and sighed over the mutability of fame.

"Where are the teams of yester-year?" he said whimsically, as he guided Barbara to her seat. She was looking at the scene before her, with eager, unaccustomed eyes. The grand stand was bright with women and flags. On the huge oval the rival teams were going through preliminary exercises.

"It makes me think of the jousts," she said.

"But imagine Lancelot and Percival in sweaters!"

Barbara recognized some of the girls she had met at the tea. The Emperor, looking gallant in a red jacket and a round, black hat with pompons, tipped over one ear, had four men about her, and, to judge from their expressions, they were being well entertained. She smiled at Barbara, and then nodded to Waring.

"You have met Miss Dare?" he said; "already!"

"Yes, she asked me to her afternoon tea—yesterday."

"Do you like her?" Waring said, with a look of amusement in his face.

Barbara flushed.

"She is—strange," she faltered.

"I met her in New York last winter. She is a very good type of a certain kind of college woman. Are you going to join her fraternity?" he added, smiling.

"She has not asked me yet and I don't think she will," Barbara said simply.

Waring laughed.

"Don't let them hypnotize you," he said. "They are not the whole of Hallworth."



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He seemed to understand without her speaking and she was grateful.

"Haven't you outgrown football?" said a clear, mocking voice behind them.

Waring turned and saw Allaire. Her golf-cape was drawn closely up to her little square chin, and its red peaked hood, framing her face, emphasized its paleness.

"I am here in the character of the aged and infirm, a fearful warning to youth and enthusiasm," he answered, gaily. Then he introduced Allaire to Barbara.

"I hope you like football, Miss Dale," Allaire said. "We are very enterprising and thorough here. Nothing short of life-blood satisfies us. The ambulances are waiting outside."

"I have never seen a game," Barbara said.

"The University encourages it to keep down the number of students," said Waring.

Barbara wondered if she would ever get used to their strange way of talking. It made her dumb.

"This is your first year, is it not, Miss Dale?" Allaire asked.

"Yes, I have just entered."

"What do you think of Hallworth?"

"It's big."

"Do you like it?"

"It is like a play. It amuses me."

Allaire and Waring laughed.

"They would never forgive her—would they?" Allaire said.

Barbara looked apologetic.

"I like it," she said earnestly. "It is strange to me

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—that is what I mean, and strange things are entertaining.”

“It is like a play,” said Waring; “comedy mostly—tragedy sometimes.”

On the field the teams were now taking their position. Their own mothers would scarcely have recognized these their gallant sons, with their forms padded, as in prophecy of disaster. When Griggs appeared the grand stand rocked with cheers.

“Look well upon our idol,” Waring said. “You behold a great man—though patched! He has had three ribs broken once, a collar-bone twice, the left leg twice and the right once—and concussion of the brain, besides.”

“How does he ever study?” Barbara inquired.

“Most of Griggs’s course has been spent in the University hospital. It was founded and endowed for the benefit of the football team. Occasionally a nervous prostration patient from the crew is admitted. You may not know,” he added, “that our coach receives a higher salary than most of the professors.”

“I wish I were the daughter of the coach instead of a mere professor,” Allaire said. “I should then have more than one party-gown a winter.”

In spite of Waring’s elaborate explanations, Barbara found herself in a state of bewilderment when she attempted to follow the movements of the game. Her heart failed to leap when a great leather ball went flying through the air and a roar of agitation shook the grand stand. What followed seemed a series of confusions, of alarms and excursions, involving misguided youth and bringing disaster upon them. As the game

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progressed tremulous, apprehensive sympathy for the under man took the place of her impersonal feeling. There was always an under man, and he was always in danger of death from a variety of causes. Sometimes four, sometimes six men bore him down. Once she counted nine, and then turned away her face—lest something shapeless should be found on the ground afterward.

“Is it always like this?” she said to Waring, anxiously.

“Well, not always as bad as this,” he assured her. “Don’t think of their ribs,” he added, smiling, “think of the glory of Hallworth!”

Barbara wondered and was mute. But she cried out when she saw a man being carried off the field.

“He has only fainted,” Waring said.

“But he doesn’t come to—and they’re dashing water in his face.”

Waring watched them a moment, then he rose.

“That looks like bad business,” he said, gravely. “If you’ll excuse me, I’ll go and see what the trouble is.”

Barbara turned to Allaire.

“Why does the game go on? He may be dead!”

“The game always goes on,” Allaire said, dryly. “Only an earthquake could stop it.”

“Do you like it?” Barbara said, drawing her brows together. “Doesn’t it spoil it for you—all this?”

Allaire smiled.

“I don’t know. It’s the liveliest thing in Hallworth. I should prefer it to a Faculty meeting. You see,” she went on, “I was born in Hallworth, and it all bores me

## THE LAW OF LIFE

more or less. I have seen so much of it, over and over, year in and year out."

Waring came back then. His face was serious. He did not look at Barbara, but at Allaire as he spoke.

"He is injured internally—the spine, they think."

Barbara grew pale.

Waring bent over her.

"Do you want to see it out?" he said in a low voice, "or shall we go for a walk to the lake."

"The lake, please."

As she rose Allaire slipped her hand in hers.

"I like you," she said. "May I come to see you?"

Barbara flushed with pleasure.

"I want you very much," she answered. Allaire's bored, detached manner was more intelligible to her than the enthusiasms of the students.

Once off the field Waring turned to her with an expression of concern.

"You probably think we're savages here. I didn't mean to give you a bad afternoon."

"It wasn't a bad afternoon, but I like this better," she said frankly. Then after a pause she added, "I couldn't help thinking of his mother—the mother of the man who was hurt."

"Let's hope he hasn't any. We're lucky who have no parents. At least, then, all our sins and mishaps are on our own heads and don't worry anybody else."

"Have you no parents?" Barbara asked gently.

"My mother died when I was born. My father six years ago."

"Mine died when I was very little. My uncle took their place."

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"Was he beautiful and stately like the style of his history?"

"Yes, I suppose he was. To me he was just Uncle Robert."

"And you lived all your life with him?"

"Yes; he brought me up, and when I was old enough I took care of his house. You see," she added, "that is why Hallworth seems so big and crowded to me. We lived such a quiet life. The homestead was two miles from the village, and over a hundred miles from any large town."

"Ideal for study."

She smiled.

"I suppose it was not a very good preparation for this life."

"Were you never lonely?"

"No; I had too much to do, a house to see to and a garden to tend, besides my studies. And we did have people sometimes, though they were generally my uncle's friends."

She was walking by Waring's side with the quick, sure step of one accustomed to long rambles. The wind brought the color to her cheeks and loosened the hair about her face. With her head thrown back, revealing her full, white throat, she looked like a young boy. Something sexless, impersonal in her manner bore out this impression.

When they came suddenly upon the lake, emerging from a little wood, through which a by-path led, she clasped her hands in silent joy. The broad sheet of water, deep blue under the afternoon sky, was covered with delicate whitecaps. The hills to the westward, rich



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as the colors of a Persian rug, slept under purple vapors. The clouds of sunset, already iridescent, seemed floating in a sea of gold.

At a little landing-place boats were moored. Barbara looked at them longingly.

"Can you row?" Waring asked.

"Oh, yes—very well."

Her soul was in her eyes as she gazed far out over the troubled surface of the lake.

"Would you like to go? I have a boat of my own here."

"Indeed, yes!"

He hesitated.

"It is rough this afternoon! Are you sure you wouldn't be afraid? It is not like a river, you know."

"Afraid!"

She laughed and ran on ahead of him down the landing. Waring looked after her with some astonishment. He had not suspected that she had so much vitality in her.

"Let me row," she said. "You don't know how well I can do it!" She held out her slender arms. "They look weak, but they're strong as steel."

"I would rather row you. Besides, you are not accustomed to lake rowing."

"But I know the technique," she said, as one who would have her way.

Waring looked at her critically.

"Can you swim?"

"Yes."

"A mistake would mean danger for both of us."

"You can trust me."



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A few minutes later they were out on the broad surface. Waring saw that he had done well to trust her. She handled the oars with a strength and skill that kept the boat true and sent it flying across the waves like a live thing. She herself seemed brightened and energized, as if by a bath of light. Waring, still full of wonder at this change in her, thought her response to nature beautiful. Something elemental seemed aroused in this quiet, reserved girl by sun and wind and sky. Would she love, he wondered, with the same strength and simplicity when her time for loving came? That she had not loved many signs told him, among them this primitive passion for nature. After a time nature would go back to its place. She would see landscapes but not visions. The thought came to him gazing at Barbara, and past her into his own dream-world, that if Corot had ever really grown up, his paintings would have lost their enchanted light.

He did not misread Barbara in this respect. To her, as to the race in its childhood, spirits of life were borne down the winds and mingled with the shining of the waves. The first joy she had known since her uncle's death thrilled her and brought her for the time wholly out of the past. Guided by Waring's hand on the rudder, the little boat swept toward the wide gold realms of sunset. She turned once to see their direction, and her eyes, fixed on that splendor of the west, brightened with a look he never forgot—of joyous recognition. She bent again to her oars. For a brief moment the prow of the little boat was headed toward the Islands of the Blest.

## CHAPTER VI.

“A STATESMAN AND A SCHOLAR.”

THE next morning Waring received a note from Dr. Penfold asking him to take one of his classes, as he himself was confined to the house with a severe cold.

The lecture-room was in Sterne Hall. Waring, with his bundle of morning papers, went directly there after breakfasting, for the lecture-hour was early. It was his first experience of the kind, so he seated himself judiciously on the platform behind the great desk, to become accustomed by degrees to the novel sensation. He imagined an audience ranged in the seats, young girls exchanging whispers while they looked him calmly over, and uncompromising boys, a formidable little army now scattered over the campus, but soon to march in upon him, presenting themselves to be educated and looking to him for all the responsibility in the matter. He grew cold at the thought and opened one of his papers as a diversion. The first thing that caught his eye was an editorial on a diplomatic event of wide significance. He read it with growing interest, finding that the opinions of the editor carried out and clarified his own.

He became aware, at last, that the class was assembling, then that the hour had struck. His absorption in the political question had completely relieved him of his embarrassment. When the upturned, silent faces reminded him that he was expected to say something, mathematics seemed trifling in comparison to the subject

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which filled his mind. He folded the paper, opened the class-book and ran his eye down the list of names. He chose one at random.

“Mr. Walker, will you kindly tell me if you have any views on the present difficulty of this country and Russia?”

A cheerful-faced boy gave a gasp of astonishment, then said:

“I beg pardon, sir, but are they scrapping?”

Waring knit his brows.

“You don’t mean to say you are ignorant of the matter?”

“Yes, sir.”

Waring opened the class-book again.

“I’m going to call the roll,” he said. “In answering to your names kindly state whether you know anything whatever about the difficulty between this country and Russia, precipitated last Friday.”

The class held its breath. Waring went slowly down the roll. Out of a class of forty-eight just seven knew something of the uppermost political topic of the hour. Five of the seven were women.

“I think I’ll enlighten you,” he said, closing the book again. “Dr. Penfold is temporarily housed with a cold. We will have politics before mathematics this morning.”

The class, regarding him with loving looks, shut their text-books as if they never intended to open them again in this world. Waring launched into his subject with an enthusiasm which he did not realize until a sudden applause burst from the class. When it had ceased he said gravely:

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"Now, do you see what I mean; why you should study these things for yourselves? You are the children of Hallworth, and Hallworth exists for the nation. She cannot do her work for the nation, this Alma Mater of yours, unless she has your intelligent patriotism to rely on."

The cheerful-faced boy rose to his feet.

"Will you please tell us, sir, what you think on the Venezuelan question?"

Waring looked at the youngster, then at his watch. An amused smile spread over his face.

"Not this morning, Mr. Walker. It is a complex subject and we have only fifteen minutes. You will kindly step to the board and work out this theorem for the benefit of the class."

In the evening Waring went to inquire for Dr. Penfold. He found him in his study nursing a heavy cold and amusing himself, as he expressed it, "with a little problem."

"Barbara has just left me," he said; "it is the first time in my adult life, Waring, that I have had feminine ministrations other than those of Mehitabel. It took the form of something hot—and I must confess comforting to my throat. She made it herself."

Waring laughed.

"I am happy, dear Doctor, that she has been appointed your guardian."

"I am afraid we will reverse situations. I have never quite understood why Dale appointed me. But I think he wanted her to go to college, to meet young people. In the last letter he ever wrote to me he said: 'I am

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afraid I have kept her too much to myself, but she is all I have.' I think he wanted to make amends."

"So he sends her to a place where she is likely to be miserable," Waring said.

Dr. Penfold knit his brows.

"You think she will not be happy here?"

"I don't see how she can, brought up as she has been, with a recluse, a scholarly aristocrat as Robert Edgeworth Dale was by all report. From what she tells me she has led the most quiet life. Hallworth must seem like a menagerie to her."

"I am afraid it does. Waring, I want you to look out for her."

"I'll do all I can, but I pity any girl tumbled into that women's dormitory with only aristocratic weapons with which to fight her way."

Dr. Penfold smiled.

"She is not like the rest—is she! Even I can see that. I should like to have brought her to my own house, but I knew that was not what her uncle wanted. It would have been in a way a repetition of her old life; and perhaps it will be better for her in the end to be at Stafford Hall."

"She will never be of it."

"No, and probably she will not come back when she has come of age."

Waring knit his brows.

"I think we must teach her to like Hallworth. I should like to see her graduate."

After leaving Dr. Penfold's Waring had intended to make other calls, but the desire for work seized him, and



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he turned his steps into a carriage-drive which led from the upper avenue to a large stone dwelling, built by the first president of Hallworth. Though for years he had not occupied it, being absent on foreign diplomatic service, its furniture, its art-treasures and the rich stores of its library remained as a kind of loan to the University. Every winter it was occupied by bachelor professors and privileged graduate students, whose only obligation was to keep up the steam.

Waring let himself in and passed through the long entrance-hall, hung with paintings and lined with pedestals bearing ghostly busts of the Roman Emperors. For the one nearest the library door he had an especial affection, and now said "Good-night, old fellow," touching for a moment the ponderous, unwilling head, with its stony wreath of laurel. On the first landing the moonlight fell through a stained window upon the drooping, beautiful face of Antinous. The silence of the great house, a silence always preserved by a careful selection of its inmates, closed in upon Waring like a veil.

But his plans for study were upset. He found Dutton in his room, cozily reading between the low lamp on the table and the wood fire on the hearth, his feet buried in a bearskin rug.

"When you spoke of your sitting-room, Waring, I had no idea that you were living in a tapestried chamber—such magnificence!"

"Sumptuous, isn't it? The story of David and Bathsheba embroidered on the walls for my benefit. Feverel found those in Venice—seventeenth century work."

"Where do you sleep?"

"Just next," Waring said, opening a door.



## “A STATESMAN AND A SCHOLAR”

Dutton peered in.

“Flemish oak and brocades, I see. Heavens! What a bed!”

“I don’t sleep in that sarcophagus. There’s an iron cot back of the screen.”

Dutton returned to his chair.

“This room suits you.”

“It’s a fine medieval background when one wants to sit up late and pretend one’s a scholar.”

Waring drew a chair to the fire and handed Dutton a cigar.

“Have you been waiting long?”

“No, only a few minutes.”

The two men smoked in silence for a while. No sound broke the stillness of the great house but the solemn ticking of a tall clock in the passage outside.

“We’re very quiet here,” Waring said at length, flicking the ashes from the end of his cigar. “Jenkins and White, each is working on a book. Mason is generally at the library until eleven.”

“Do you dine here?”

“Yes. Mason’s mother is with him, so we dine *en famille*. The housekeeper cooks, and her son is butler—useful man—valet—everything.”

“You are in clover! You won’t miss New York.”

“New York, as a grub reporter, was hell generally—‘cold common hell’—to quote our Shelley.”

“But you got your chance in the war,” Dutton said, blowing the delicate blue rings of smoke and watching them float wreath-like in the upper twilight of the room.

“I got my chance, yes, and made the money I wanted to make.”

## THE LAW OF LIFE

“And now?”

“The doctorate—and a professorship without the intermediate stages—if possible.”

Dutton looked puzzled.

“I still don’t quite understand why you came back to Hallworth after you’d made your hit as a war correspondent. You were fairly launched on your career. What made you give it up, Waring?”

Waring smoked in silence for a while, then he said:

“Perhaps other kinds of ambitions.”

“I can’t imagine you—just a scholar.”

Waring drew his brows together in a slight frown.

“There’s something wrong with the whole system in this country,” he said slowly, as if thinking aloud. “As if a university career necessarily sidetracked a man, turned him into a kind of half-woman, out of life and other men’s interests. It isn’t so abroad. Men go into Parliament by way of Oxford and Cambridge, but precious few go to Congress by way of Harvard.”

Dutton’s face lighted with sudden comprehension.

“You want to be a public man, Waring, and you want to use the University for a stepping-stone.”

Waring laughed.

“You are delightful, Dutton. Yes, I want to climb over the dead bodies of the Faculty—but it’s true, isn’t it, that our universities don’t have the influence on public life they ought to have? I’d like to found one to train young men for public service.”

“So it isn’t mathematics, after all?”

“Anything will do for a doctorate.”

Dutton leaned over impulsively and placed a hand on Waring’s knee.

## “A STATESMAN AND A SCHOLAR”

“I always did see a big future for you. But for God’s sake, don’t marry. You’d ruin your prospects.”

Waring smiled.

“I haven’t any as yet to ruin. Such advice from you, Dutton, of all persons! You abject sentimental-ist!”

“Ah, but I shall never be famous. I can afford to marry.”

“Will it be—Allaire?”

“I am in love with Mrs. Maturin,” Dutton said gravely. “Allaire will not let me be in love with her—besides, she is too exquisite for the likes of me. I should feel like a day-laborer owning a Botticelli.”

“Allaire is going to be pleasant to Miss Dale, the ward of our incomparable Penfold. We are forming a conspiracy to make her like Hallworth. Will you join, Dutton?”

“With all my heart. Are you president of this conspiracy, Waring?”

“No; I’m only looking after Miss Dale, while she looks after her guardian.”

## CHAPTER VII.

### TWO HOUSES.

THE arrangement of the campus at Hallworth had not been without its influence upon the social life of the faculty. The majority of the professors' families lived under the very shadow of the University buildings, their little gardens and lawns merging. The circle was therefore bound together by the double tie of community of interest and of neighborhood. The social life, kept by circumstances singularly free from the rivalries of wealth, reflected in many of its phases the original ideals of the nation, the plain living and high thinking of old New England, somewhat modernized and softened by rose-light from pink candle-shades. Aesthetic luxuries of richly bound books and rare editions were freely indulged in, sometimes at cost of a close study of household economies. The members of the Faculty had the good fortune, becoming rarer and rarer in American society, of living within certain definite limitations, their salaries of from three to six thousand a year precluding rivalries except on intellectual lines. If champagne were out of the question, the best table claret was within reach of all. Waring thought he saw the chief corrective to the commercial ideals of the country, not alone in the intellectual life of Hallworth and similar institutions, but in their social life. The full force of this conception was impaired, however, by the whimsical afterthought that if certain American citizens had not amassed enormous fortunes, untroubled by the ghosts of

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Lexington, many of these institutions would never have been founded.

The provincialism of the higher culture was not altogether absent from the social life of Hallworth, but in an assembly of specialists this was to be expected. When one is an authority on Old High German roots the affairs of the nation may sometimes sink into insignificance, and the classification of protoplasms may sometimes obscure the importance of a local election. The cosmopolitanism of Hallworth was largely preserved by the Wife of the Faculty. Possessed of charm and intellect, interested alike in the latest discovery of science and in the success of a dinner-party, able to entertain an Oxford lion and to make the children's clothes, she always saved the day. She steered her husband away from the rocks of egotism, and guided him into the shallows of his neighbor's conversation. She took him to receptions when he was longing to be at work on his monograph of the Avignon Period of the Papacy. She covered his retreat from the reception with fair words which clothed him in the character of a Chesterfield instead of an untamed scholar.

Waring, after his talk with Dr. Penfold concerning Barbara, tried to make such social opportunities for her as he thought she could embrace during her period of mourning. It was his proposition that Dr. Penfold should bring her some evening to the house of the ex-President, and that they should then call upon Mrs. Maturin in Dutton's company. Dutton asked Allaire to be of the party, veiling his own eagerness for her consent under a plea for Barbara, who, as Dr. Penfold's ward, was in a peculiar and appealing position.



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"I think she's quite able to take care of herself," Allaire commented; "but I like her, and I'll go."

Waring met them in the entrance-hall. It was the first time Barbara had seen him in evening-dress. Instinctively she glanced from him to Dr. Penfold, whose coat by contrast seemed of an ancient cut. He was looking about him with a gentle, surprised air.

"I have not been in this house since Feverel left us to go to the Court of St. James. I believe it is full of art treasures," he added, turning to Barbara; "but Mr. Waring will have to explain those to you."

"There's a box of cigars on the library table, Doctor, and a good fire on the hearth."

Dr. Penfold, with a smile of apology, left them.

"Doesn't he care for pictures?" Barbara asked.

"No," Allaire answered, "and has the saving grace not to pretend to."

Barbara was presented to Mrs. Mason. Dutton, when his turn came, wrung her hand heartily.

"You must like Dutton," Waring said. "He's a delightful chap."

"And never talks about his specialty," Allaire added.

Barbara laughed. She was prepared to like any friend of Waring's, and looking at Dutton, she thought it would be easy to like him for his own sake. The simplicity of his manner appealed at once to her.

Before leaving the drawing-room Waring showed her the famous Corot which hung between two of the long windows, the Titian above the carved fireplace, and the incomparable little Watteau over the Louis Quinze desk. To the atmosphere of a scholar's home she was accus-



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tomed, but not to æsthetic luxury. The great drawing-room had that character of strangeness which accompanies distinction, whether of personality or place. In such a room Barbara thought one might be able to have brilliant fancies, to say unusual things.

"Feverel loans Watteaus and Titians to us poor devils as we loan books to students," Waring said; "it's exquisite, isn't it?" he added, seeing Barbara's eyes fixed dreamily on the shimmering, dream-like landscape of Corot.

"It is like the lands you see in your thoughts," she answered; "when you are walking through the twilight and everything is still."

"Do you like the Old Masters? There are some delightful Dutch examples in the library."

They ushered her into a long room lined with books, and having alcoves, oak-paneled, against the dark background of which some small paintings glowed like jewels. While Waring was explaining them to Barbara, Allaire seated herself opposite to Dr. Penfold, who regarded her mildly through a beatific haze of delicate gray-blue smoke.

"That is a very good cigar," she said.

"Extravagantly, romantically good," he answered. "I feel like a man who burns a poem."

"No, you don't at all, because you don't like poetry."

Dr. Penfold laughed.

"You are always discovering my limitations, Allaire."

"Your ward likes poetry."

"Does she?"

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"Yes; she has feelings in her chest, lots of them! I could see by the way she looked at that Corot."

"You used to have feelings in your chest, as you express it. I remember your crying a whole afternoon because Professor Leonard's bulldog had killed your kitten. It was summer and the windows were open, and in despair I left my work and scoured the University farm for another kitten. I found one at last and brought it home in my pocket, only to be told by a six-year-old that it wasn't the proper shade."

"You didn't care about my grief," Allaire said; "you only wanted peace and quiet for your work. I used to wish we'd move away or that you would. My childhood was repressed because of a mathematical neighbor."

"We are going on to Mrs. Maturin's," Waring said, approaching them.

"Must I go?" Dr. Penfold said, reluctantly.

Waring laughed.

"Remember, as a guardian you should go into society."

Dr. Penfold laid down his cigar and rose at once. Waring had observed that he seemed more keenly aware of Barbara's existence and of his duties toward her than he had ever known him to be of any human being. He seemed conscientiously trying to repay a debt of love and gratitude.

Barbara's first impression of this new house was of a bower of palms and growing plants; of luxury at once stately and inviting. At one side of the large hall the drawing-room opened. Some people in evening-dress

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were gathered about the hearth, which extended into the room under a cone-shaped canopy of carved stone.

For the first time in her life Barbara was painfully conscious of her appearance. Her muscles grew rigid with shyness as she looked down at her plain black frock, her stiff black gloves and thick walking-shoes.

Dutton read her thoughts and whispered in her ear: "Mrs. Maturin is also in mourning."

The kindness of his voice gave her courage. She stepped forward into the drawing-room. At the same moment one of the group about the fire rose and came toward her, a woman who seemed to Barbara as strange and fascinating as the aristocratic paintings she had just seen. A patrician face lit by keen, kind eyes was bent for a moment toward her. Barbara's heart leaped.

"She is lovely and she is unhappy," she thought, in that instant of greeting.

Then she was introduced to the other guests, Professor Joyce, whom she had met before; Mrs. Joyce, a little brunette looking like a poppy in a gown of scarlet chiffon; Mrs. Cartwright, the wife of the professor of political economy, whose languid, graceful manner seemed reminiscent of a previous incarnation in the Orient; Mrs. Leonard, and a clergyman, a Mr. Perceval, of about forty years of age, who had the head of a saint and the manner of a man of the world.

"Put me in a corner," Barbara whispered to Dutton, "I just want to look on."

She felt among these people like a child who is sitting up too late. She slipped into a seat under a bank of palms, and Dutton sat down beside her.

"You don't have to talk to me," he said, in his kind,

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literal way, "and if you're alone, Mrs. Maturin will think you are being neglected."

Barbara was studying her hostess from the shadow of the palms. Clothes had never interested her very much, but she looked now with closest attention at every detail of Mrs. Maturin's gown. Dutton's words, "She is also in mourning!" recurred to her. Yes, but what a difference! Here was a grief that expressed itself not clumsily but with perfect grace. Barbara felt a sudden pang of jealousy, as if in some way she was not being duly reverent to the memory of her uncle. She glanced down at her own frock.

Waring made his way to Mrs. Maturin's side, and the others paused that he might enter into conversation with her. Barbara, watching her every expression, walked in that space of time a long way into maturity. The lectures of Hallworth had failed to arouse in her any great degree of enthusiasm, but she was stirred to the depths by this vision of a woman who bore about her all the enchantment of new revelations. What world did she embody—fashion, learning, experience, pleasure, pain? She could not tell, but she knew it was a world as yet closed to her.

She looked about the room for a solution. The walls, paneled in white wood, with garlands of carved tinted flowers borne by Cupids, were bare of pictures. A deep crimson carpet covered the floor, and the chairs and divans were upholstered in crimson velvet. Bowls of violets and red roses were placed about. The corners of the room were banked with palms. Against this background Mrs. Maturin, in her black dress, struck the minor note which its blandness needed. Between her-

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self and this room, with its suggestions of urbanity and of the joy of life, no contradiction existed. It stood to her in the relation of a happy memory. But Barbara, picturing an appropriate background for her, called up the interior of a cathedral. She knew that Mrs. Maturin had been much in the world, had been a wife for two brilliant years; but these experiences had not obliterated a certain girlishness of appearance underneath the somewhat stately manner. She herself was too young to know that a great love keeps and leaves the soul virginal.

In an interval of the conversation Mrs. Maturin rose and came over to Barbara.

"You are out of the circle," she said; "will you not come nearer the fire?"

She took the girl's hand and led her to a place beside her own.

"I have seen you once before, Miss Dale, a long time ago. You would not remember."

"You have seen me before?" Barbara repeated in surprise.

"Yes; you were a little thing of seven or eight. I was a young girl spending the summer in your part of the country. We drove over the hills to see the house in which Dr. Dale lived. We wanted to meet him, to shake hands with him; but we did not know whether we could get up the courage. When we came to the front gate a little, dark-haired girl was standing there in a white frock, her arms full of daisies. We asked her, because she seemed to have a funny, grown-up air of proprietorship, if she thought Dr. Dale would see us; but she answered: 'I entreat you not to disturb him. He is putting Savonarola on trial this afternoon.' "



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A ripple of laughter brought the color to Barbara's cheeks. She was conscious that they were all looking at her. The Reverend Mr. Perceval, who was sitting near her, said:

"Were your sympathies with Savonarola, Miss Dale, or with your distinguished uncle?"

"I don't remember," Barbara said; "but I'm sorry I was ungracious."

"You were not ungracious, only fully alive to the importance of the crisis. I thought of that little girl long after when I was at San Marco—and I am glad to meet her now."

Her voice was indescribably sweet. Barbara felt at that moment that she would follow such a voice to the world's end.

"Miss Dale still respects the crises of a scholar's work," Dr. Penfold said.

Mrs. Leonard sighed.

"I shall be so glad when that terrible History of Russia is finished. A crisis is always on when I'm giving a dinner-party or when a bore calls."

Professor Leonard said nothing, but looked grim.

"I used to stand in awe of Mr. Joyce's study door," Mrs. Joyce said airily, "until I found him one day playing poker back of it, with two lambs of instructors. Since then I never hesitate to go straight to him when I want anything, though it be over the ruins of Carthage."

Joyce smiled amiably, but made no comment.

"How is your mission in Mercer Street coming on?" Mrs. Maturin said, turning to Perceval.

"Very well," he answered.

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"I can't forgive you, Perceval," Waring said, in a tone which showed Barbara there was a friendship of long standing between them, "for trying to make saints of people. When you've accomplished it what will become of the playwrights and novelists?"

Perceval smiled.

"There could be no dramatic values in a world of saints, could there!" he said.

He was the rector of St. Jude's, an old church where generations of the townspeople had worshiped. He had come there in Waring's sophomore year, and Waring was prepared to be critical of him, because Perceval had stopped short in a brilliant legal career to enter the ministry. He liked him, however, when he found in him a winning combination of medieval faith and ultra-modern thought, a rare union of gentleman and saint. It was one of Waring's boyish dictums that saints were not as a rule well-bred.

Perceval's influence over the students was deep and wide, and he kept open church for them on week-days as well as Sundays. His services, though rich with flowers and lights and music, gave no offence to the old-fashioned members of his congregation, because he never seemed preoccupied with symbols. On the other hand no one ever knew whether he was orthodox. He had loaned books to students which surely deserved a place on the Index.

His sermons told little, for in his rare allusions to dogma a certain wistfulness of expression made his hearers conscious only of the margin of mystery in the universe. He was found, therefore, a formidable rival to the learned and eloquent University preachers, some

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of whom, because Hallworth was committed to no sectarian principle, thought it necessary to address the University as if it were a secret society pledged to atheism. Students and professors alike, seeking refreshment of spirit, would slip away to St. Jude's, where the young priest did not weary them with doctrinal subtleties, but exhorted them to live temperate lives, to keep faith with their fellows and to hang on like grim death to the Ten Commandments while awaiting further instructions. The light might not break at once from beyond the horizons of the world, but it would break.

"You already know the Reverend Mr. Perceval," Mrs. Maturin said to Waring.

"From my sophomore year. You see we are old friends," Waring answered. "I always think of you, Perceval, as chaplain of Hallworth."

Mrs. Maturin's face lighted.

"Chaplain to a modern American university," she said; "what a post that would be, with a faculty steeped in science and the young things posing as agnostics."

Barbara looked eagerly at Perceval to see what he would say. She was strongly attracted by the clear-cut, manly face, with its kind blue eyes and expression of reserve.

"What would you do with them, Perceval?" Waring said, with a certain challenge in his tone.

"Do? Nothing but turn them over to life for their instruction—poor little agnostics!" he added, in a lower tone.

"We're terribly self-conscious in this country over our religious doubts," Mrs. Cartwright said.

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"It's like our culture," said Waring. "Over there it's a matter of course—in the blood. Here it's oftener a pack on one's back."

"And yet Hallworth, with all its crudities, represents the age, the time, better than Oxford, doesn't it?" Mrs. Maturin said, looking from one to the other.

"Oxford is a university of memories," said Percival; "beautiful—but still memories."

"I think I prefer Hallworth," Mrs. Maturin said; "it's alive, every part of it."

"What are you solemn people talking about?" Mrs. Joyce's bell-like voice interrupted. "Hallworth, I suppose. I get sick of the very name. That wretch Herbert promised me I should live in New York after we were married. I wanted him to go to Columbia. Columbia's so nice! You can go down on Twenty-third Street and forget all about it, looking at the new hats. But you can't forget Hallworth one minute—you have to go fifteen miles to get out of the sight of its towers."

Her listeners laughed. Joyce's face wore a serene and amiable expression.

"See what you've brought Mrs. Joyce to," Dutton said.

The little lady thrust a foot beyond the ruffles of her gown and tapped the hearth impatiently.

"How far would thirty-five hundred go in New York!" Joyce said. "We'd have to live in a flat named 'Priscilla' or 'Rosamond,' the kind in which you punch a button to open the front door, and our dinner would come bounding joyously up to us on the dumb-waiter. Here we have a whole house, beautiful scenery, fresh eggs, University butter."

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"Fresh eggs!" said his wife scornfully. "If you knew, Herbert, how I have to scour the country and go down on my very knees to the farmers!"

"The provinces have their drawbacks," said Dutton, sympathetically; "but I assure you, Mrs. Joyce, we couldn't possibly spare you."

"And you should stand by your guns," said Professor Leonard.

"Oh, I try to do my duty," Mrs. Joyce said pensively. "I have all Herbert's students at the house twice during the winter, and have to go to bed a week after each occasion, and I call on all the instructors' mothers and maiden sisters, and if they haven't mothers, I try to be a mother to them, and look interested when they talk of ichthyosauri and the philosophy of Nietzsche and comfort them when they grumble about their salaries. Oh, I do my duty!"

"Indeed you do," said Dutton soothingly.

Perceval laughed.

"You should write your memoirs, Mrs. Joyce."

He came over and took a seat beside her. Mrs. Maturin turned to Barbara.

"Mr. Waring tells me you are fond of pictures. Would you like to see the gallery?"

The gallery opened out of the drawing-room, and contained a small collection, chiefly of the modern French school. Waring lingered over his explanation of the pictures to Barbara, because her enthusiasm brought that look to her face which had transfigured her when rowing on the lake. "She responds to nature and to art," he said to himself, "but not to people." He had thought her shy and stiff in Mrs. Maturin's drawing-room, but



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her child-like appearance excused it. He could not realize that she was twenty.

While they were looking at a Rousseau, Dutton joined them.

"You must take Miss Dale into the library," he said. "There are some splendid copies in oils there of the Old Masters."

"To think he had to leave it all," Barbara said softly, "and her."

"She is greatly to be pitied," Dutton said.

"I don't think so," Waring said. "She lost him at the height of their happiness. Isn't it better to have superlative memories than——"

He paused, and Dutton threw himself into the breach.

"Don't believe these heresies, Miss Dale," he said eagerly, with a charming apology lighting up his thin, dark face, and then turning to Waring, he added: "You should not say such things before Miss Dale."

"If they were happy, death could be only a misfortune," she said in the grave voice which made her seem to Waring sometimes years older than himself.

He smiled, but made no answer. He led the way across the hall to a room which ran the entire length of the house. Above the low bookcases hung copies in oils of the famous pictures of the European galleries. The beautiful and rare things with which the room was filled awakened in Barbara a feeling of intrusion, the sense of being a third person in the presence of two lovers.

Waring, who had been examining some books, turned and found her in absorbed silence looking at the mantel of the fireplace. In its center was a crucifix carved in

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high relief upon the wood. She turned to him with a question in her face. Dutton joined them.

"You are wondering about that. I asked Mrs. Maturin once what it meant. She answered that the sum of all human knowledge ended there. Do you see what is carved under it—carved since his death?"

"My soul, an alien here, hath flown to nobler wars," Barbara read slowly. "How beautiful!"

"Mrs. Maturin is more of a mystic than one would think," Dutton said.

"A realist, rather," said Waring. "What does the crucifix stand for but the baldest realities of life, struggle and pain and defeat?"

"Perceval would add—'and sacrifice.'"

Waring shrugged his shoulders.

"We are all sacrificed more or less, the weaker to the stronger. Are you tired, Miss Dale; shall we go back to the drawing-room?"

"I am not tired, but I think I ought to go. Haven't I stayed too long?"

"Oh, that counts nothing here, if you're happy."

They wandered back to the hall.

"More people have come," Dutton said.

"Yes," said Waring, studying the new arrivals from the shelter of a palm. "Germanic Literature, Early American History, Electrical Engineering and Sanskrit Roots." He turned to Barbara. "Don't you think Mathematics and Chemistry better say 'Good-night'?"

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A TURN OF THE ROAD.

IN the development of character there are certain transitional stages when touches light as rose-petals leave an ineffaceable impression. During her first weeks at Hallworth it was not the complex machinery of university organization which was most significant to Barbara, but the trifles of the hour; snatches of talk in the corridors, the chance smile of a friendly classmate, the dress of a young girl going to a dance, the morning light through the halos of the saints in the chapel windows; the strange, faint odor of books in the stacks of the library, small heartaches, and sudden joy at the sight of a rift of blue between November clouds, or over some well-turned phrase of the professor in his lecture-room.

Her evening at Mrs. Maturin's had a practical effect in enabling her to get a truer perspective of the life at Stafford Hall. Definite sympathies leaning toward that maturer society of which she had had a glimpse were awakened in her. She felt dimly that allowance would be made there for her inexperience, whereas the girl-students were the most uncompromising of judges. Her guardian, Dutton, Waring and Allaire represented Hallworth to her. Her college-mates, with the exception of the Emperor and Elizabeth King, remained as unknown as Martians.

Helena Dare, after her first attempt to treat Barbara as an experienced junior should treat a little freshman, suddenly changed her tactics by taking her behind

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the veil of what she was pleased to call her university manner. She seemed to delight in showing her unconventional self through the medium of whimsical conversations. An adept in certain collegiate arts of fascination, she herself had become half-fascinated by this grave child, as she called her, who never yielded an inch to her caressing manner, with its half-veiled suggestion of panther-like traits. Of these talks with the Emperor, Barbara remembered most clearly one which gained significance through its association in point of time with certain important events in her own life.

She was bending over her books late one night at the end of February when the Emperor entered and seated herself at the study table.

"I want to be married," she said abruptly.

"Why?"

"So I can know unmarried men."

Barbara laughed.

"Can't you know them anyway? You do know a great many."

"Yes; but it's trying. It takes all one's energies to quell their suspicions."

Barbara reflected upon this, but her experience with men being limited to occasional good-comradeship walks with Waring or Dutton, she found nothing to say.

"Would you like to be married?" the Emperor asked.

"I haven't thought much about it."

"I believe you, Barbara. If another freshman told me that I should say she lied."

"Why should one lie?"

"To guard truth, I suppose. It's a tender plant.

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Elizabeth King tells me you are really going to attend Miss Ravenel's reception to-morrow night, and that she is to help you dress."

"She wants to do my hair for me."

The Emperor regarded her through half-closed lids.

"I should like to see you in certain kinds of dresses. You are unusual, and you don't know it; more's the pity. But your type is not to be appreciated by young things such as herd here. I appreciate it, because I'm an old soul."

"An old soul!" Barbara repeated, bewildered.

"Yes; I've been through a number of incarnations," the Emperor said solemnly; but the corners of her mouth twitched.

"You are always jesting."

"No, not always—only when I am in earnest. Well, I am going. I see you want to study. Now say, 'Good-night, my Emperor!'"

"But you are not my Emperor," Barbara said gravely.

"I can wait. I am good at waiting."

"To come into your kingdom?" Barbara said, with a gleam of mischief in her eyes.

"Yes; in the undiscovered country." She paused at the door and looked back.

"Some day you and I will understand each other, and understanding is good—better, even, than caring, because it doesn't hurt."

"Does caring always hurt?" Barbara asked.

"Try it and see," said the Emperor. Then she was gone.



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The next evening Barbara sat in her stiff white petticoats before her mirror, her dark hair hanging about her like a cloud. She was awaiting Elizabeth King. Between the two girls a real friendship had from the first existed; Elizabeth's temperament being of that joyous type which in any environment seems conscious only of those elements that will increase its joy. Her blitheness was of the nature of sunshine and fresh air, all enfolding yet impalpable and impersonal. She had accepted Barbara as she accepted everyone, as she was, without wish to make her over. Barbara for her part was always happier and surer of herself when in Elizabeth's company. To-night she awaited her to dispel a certain chill of reluctance which had settled upon her. She sat in her chair stiffly, and wished that she were not going to the reception. But the invitation from the Dean of the Women's Hall seemed to her of a compulsory nature, like a royal summons. She knew Miss Ravenel chiefly through Waring's characterization of her as "Young in years, old in experience, and timeless in charm."

Looking over her limited wardrobe for a gown to wear upon this momentous occasion she had selected a black silk. It was laid out nicely now upon the bed. A pair of shining new white gloves lay beside the dress.

Elizabeth entered radiant.

Barbara rose to her feet. Her face lightened as at the sight of a fair sunset or of a perfect flower.

"How lovely you look! What a beautiful dress!"

"It isn't the dress, dear; I'll tell you what it is." Her voice was gay as a bird's, her eyes full of light. But Barbara continued to look at the dress, a cloud of

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pale-blue diaphanous stuff caught up here and there with tiny bunches of forget-me-nots. A wreath of the same flower decked the low-cut waist from which Elizabeth's shoulders gleamed white. In her soft brown hair was a knot of blue velvet ribbon. Her blue eyes shone like stars.

"Dear heart! Look at me."

"I am looking."

"No; but right in my eyes. What do you see there?"

"You're happy."

"Happy! Dear, do you see the flowers I wear, the flowers I'm carrying?"

"Forget-me-nots."

"Dear, I'm engaged."

"Engaged," Barbara repeated vaguely.

"Yes. You stand and look at me as if you didn't quite believe it. Don't I look happy enough to be engaged?"

"Indeed, yes!"

"Come kiss me, then. Don't you know it's the most wonderful thing in the world to be engaged to the man you love?"

"Oh, Elizabeth, I am glad!"

"I know you are; but you say it as if you didn't understand. But how could you—how can any one——" She glided to the window and hid her face for a moment, looking up at the stars.

"Who is he?"

"Frederick Clyde."

"The class-president?"

"Yes, that's one little bit of him. I wrote mother last night, though I guess she knew it was coming. The

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Emperor knows and you—that's all. The others I shan't tell for a while. You see we can't be married until we have our degrees."

"I see," said Barbara.

"Sit down, dear. I can talk just as well while I'm doing your hair."

"You can't do it in that gown."

"Of course I can, and when it's done I'll show you what I have in that bundle. Now, don't say a word. I am going to turn you into a Madonna. What do you think the Emperor said when I told her I was engaged?"

"I couldn't guess."

"She said: 'It's a hackneyed phenomenon, but your spirit of eternal youth will make it wonderful. Please let me look on.' Doesn't that sound like her? You know she's been engaged three times."

"How could she!"

"She has a restless intellect. She likes to investigate people. Then when the mystery is gone she tires of them. Dear, turn your head a little that way. There, don't you look like a Madonna?"

"I don't know what a Madonna looks like."

"Oh, pure and far off and as if she couldn't dance, but beautiful and strange too. You're the only girl in this place looks so. You ought to make the most of it. Now you shall see what I want you to wear."

She unpinned a muslin bundle and shook out a dress of white organdie.

"It's one of my summer ones. I never wore it here. I want you to wear it this evening. We're just of a height and both slender."

Barbara flushed.

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"You're very, very kind, but I couldn't, Elizabeth."

"Why not, dear?"

"It doesn't seem right for me to do it."

"Well, just let me slip it on you for the effect. I've been wanting to see you in something besides black."

Barbara submitted, and the delicate diaphanous skirt was put on her.

"You have a beautiful neck and arms; you should show them," Elizabeth said, as she adjusted the waist. "Now look at yourself. Oh, Barbara, dear, do wear it. You'd create a sensation."

Barbara smiled.

"But I don't want to create a sensation. I just want to hide in a corner and look on."

Yet a thrill went through her as she turned to the mirror. In all her life she had never had on a dress like this. It enveloped like a caress, in its soft, airy fullness. Yet there seemed something almost wrong in its beauty, some element which changed her into an unfamiliar person for whose thoughts and feelings she could not be responsible.

"I have white violets for it, real ones."

"Oh, Elizabeth, you are so good, but I don't think I ought to wear it."

"But why?"

"It's too pretty and it isn't mine. I should feel almost deceitful."

"But this *is* you—and that black gown is somebody else."

Barbara shook her head.

"I don't think I'm happy enough to wear a dress like this."

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“Very well, dear. You shall do just as you please. Only let me take the ruchings out of that waist. You want to be all in black with the violets for the only touch of white.”

Barbara watched her as she cut the careful stitches.

“You take a great deal of trouble for me, Elizabeth.”

“No credit. I love you.”

“Do you—really—love me?” Barbara said slowly, while a radiant look stole into her face, which had the effect of a gleam of sunshine falling upon a pale flower.

“Of course,” Elizabeth answered, with her happy nonchalance. “Did it never occur to you that you might be lovable?”

From the foundation of Hallworth its official festivities had been characterized by a certain democratic spirit shown in the selection and amalgamation of the guests. The deadlocks common in gatherings of the learned were usually prevented by a judicious admixture of townfolk, and in some instances of the students. The business man knowing nothing of the professor's hobby—early texts it might be, or the origins of feudalism, and the professor knowing nothing of the fluctuations of trade, the two would generally find a subject upon which they could both converse, such as the amazing impositions of the local trolley line. The ignorance of the highly educated and the ignorance of those not born under an academic star were thus fused into the amiabilities of a social occasion. The students provided another wholesome leaven, the audacity and lack of rev-



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erence of the youthful American serving to render the claims of learning vague and uncertain.

Miss Ravenel, the Dean of the Women's Hall, had further exalted the claims of society above those of scholarship by instituting a series of entertainments of which the supreme touch was grace. Her receptions were an appealing fusion of flowers, candle-lights, music and suppers which secured her the devotion of the male students and appreciative professors.

Barbara, tuned to admiration, if not to gaiety, by Elizabeth's happiness, lost consciousness of her timidity as the Dean welcomed her, and at once became interested in the scene before her. The great drawing-room was filled with people, the hum of their voices drowning the music of the stringed instruments. They were all wearing, as they wore their evening-clothes, the third manner, that impalpable, social armor which has all the reserve and cautiousness of hostility under its embroidery of flowers. Even the most preoccupied professors had laid aside for a time the primitive traits of the scholar, and were appearing in the character of the worldly-minded—but at the same time paying the usual penalty for such transformation by a forfeiture of original charm.

Barbara recognized many of her classmates, gay as birds in their bright dresses, who were attempting innocent coquetries with the younger Faculty or with the students. The fraternity men were noticeable because of a certain indifference in their bearing which proclaimed them to other students, at least, as world-weary runners of the gamut of pleasure. Freshmen of the genus which combines boy and cub in equal propor-

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tions, looking distinctly and frankly miserable in their evening-clothes, gave each other moral support in palm-screened corners, and exchanged bets as to the kinds of ice-cream which would be served at supper. Barbara, in search of a nook from where she could view the assembly, found herself before she was aware in a group of boys not yet of the age or disposition to yield to feminine charms. They eyed her crossly, but seeing nothing objectionable in a pale-faced girl in black who seemed, like themselves, somewhat out of place, they made room for her, one of them giving her a chair.

Barbara sat quiet as a mouse, well entertained by their comments and boyish jokes on the hollowness of the occasion. She felt more at her ease with them than with the girls, whose hybrid manners partook neither of the naturalness of experience nor the naturalness of the child.

Her unspoken sympathy cast out at last the dumb devil, evoked in one boy of the group by the mere presence of a woman. He turned a frank, freckled face to hers.

"Do you know why I'm in hiding?" he said gaily.

"No."

"Every blessed professor in this room has conditioned me in something or other."

"Oh, I see!" Barbara said politely.

"I wouldn't have come at all," he went on confidentially; "but the supper is great. It's worth the preliminary martyrdom."

His honest eyes took on a dreamy expression, as if in sensuous contemplation of joys to be.

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"Are you hungry?" Barbara asked, with an accent of sympathy.

"I'm always hungry! I belong to an eating club, the main object of which seems to be a competition of the slightest possible sustenance on which the human frame can endure. Table board is three dollars a week."

"Don't you really get enough to eat?"

"Never."

"Perhaps that's the reason you're conditioned," Barbara said, gravely intent upon a solution of the difficulty. "Perhaps your strength isn't kept up enough for hard study."

The Boy threw back his head and laughed, and laughed, but gave no explanation for his mirth.

Suddenly his face became grave.

"Are you a freshman?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Then we're classmates."

Some burden seemed to be resting upon his young soul. He looked preoccupied, as if a struggle were going on within him. The truth was that the Boy had a little sister twelve years old, who expected some day to enter Hallworth. Barbara reminded him of her in a vague, indefinable way. He was thinking that the little sister might be at Hallworth just as this girl was; might be, as she seemed, a lonely, forgotten freshman, with no one to look after her—to take her to supper.

The Boy had counted on a masculine raid in the supper-room, a gallant charge upon salads and ices, unencumbered by a fluttering feminine thing who must be fed before one's own appetite could be appeased. Now all this vision of delight was clouded by a doubt. The

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struggle was sharp, but something rose in the Boy at last and conquered. He turned a meek face to Barbara.

“Have you—anyone—to take you—in to supper?”

“No,” she answered.

“May I have—have—that pleasure?” he stammered, looking quite miserable.

“You are very kind,” she said. “Yes, thank you.”

This excursion into the land of formality had a paralyzing effect upon both of them. They sat stiffly in their chairs, looking at the assemblage and saying nothing to each other. Barbara, with quick instinct, felt that the Boy had sacrificed his dear freedom for her sake. She cast about in her mind for some means of releasing him. Just then she saw Waring making his way toward her, and she half rose from her chair.

“I’ve been looking for you everywhere. I want to take you to the supper-room.”

Barbara turned to the Boy.

“You were good,” she said; “but you’ll manage better without me.”

He reached out his hand.

“Thank you,” he said heartily, then blushed as he realized the warmth of his gratitude. “You don’t misunderstand?” he added.

“I understand perfectly,” Barbara said, and the light of her smile passed into his own boyish eyes.

Waring looked on amused. He never expected Dr. Penfold’s ward to act like the other little freshmen. Everything she did and said seemed characterized by a certain clarity, as of early morning light. She reminded him of a young, visionary boy. Between herself and him an impersonal relationship existed which contained

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no element of sex. During these months he had frequently been her guide to the beautiful walks and places which abounded about Hallworth. On these excursions he had been chiefly conscious of her delight in nature, of her fearlessness, and her absolute freedom from little feminine tricks of speech and manner. She talked well of the things she knew well, but her capacity for silence was great. She spoke little of her past, but at times Waring caught glimpses of that still, richly colored world in which her long childhood had been spent. It lay back of her quiet grief, like a landscape steeped in the tints of sunset. Waring thought she sometimes acted as if Hallworth were a dream to her and that vanished life with an old scholar were the only reality she knew. Yet she was no mystic. Her sudden, passionate delight in a flower, in a tree, catching the last light of the sun; her abundant joy in sun and air, revealed to him a temperament where sense and spirit blended imperceptibly, peculiarly susceptible to enchantments, and yielding up with lavish generosity the gratitude of the enchanted.

He noticed to-night a change in her appearance. She had more color than usual and her eyes were bright. An intangible atmosphere of femininity, never before perceived by Waring, surrounded her.

"You are happy to-night," he said, as they made their way toward the supper-room.

"I have been with a friend who was very happy," she answered.

"This is your first appearance at one of these affairs, isn't it?"

"Quite my first."

"How do you like it?"



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“It’s pretty and gay to look at.”

“These things haven’t as much character and color as they had even five years ago. They might be in New York as well as in Hallworth,” Waring said.

He guided her to a corner of the supper-room. Dutton joined them, and bending down, said to Barbara: “This is your *début*. You’re going to learn to dance soon, so that we can take you to the hops.”

“No, Miss Dale is not going to be turned into an average freshman,” Waring said. “Heaven forbid!”

“What am I to be?” she asked, looking from one to the other with a smile.

A gallant speech rose to Waring’s lips, but he checked it.

At that moment a servant approached them to say that a messenger from Dr. Penfold’s was in the hall and wished to speak with Miss Dale. They found Mehitabel, her brows wrinkled in a frown of anxiety. Half an hour before Dr. Penfold had slipped on an icy pavement and broken his right arm and wrist.

## CHAPTER IX.

### A RIVAL OF MATHEMATICS.

WARING and Barbara found Dr. Penfold pacing up and down his study, awaiting the arrival of the physician. He was trembling with excitement, the result, Barbara thought at first, of shock.

"What am I to do?" he burst out, as they entered. "Could anything be more unfortunate, with that textbook promised the publishers for the first of May! March—April—why, it will take two whole months for this wretched arm to heal. If that piece of ice had only been at the left of the walk!"

"Please sit down," Barbara said. "You must keep quiet or you'll do it more injury."

She led him to an armchair, and, doubling up a steamer-rug, put it under the broken arm for support. He looked up at Waring pitifully.

"Waring, I've always led a sober and temperate life. Why should I have such a visitation?"

Waring threw back his head and laughed.

"Doctor, it's the irony of fate. Only yesterday I saw a drunken man pick his crazy steps gravely down the Westhill road, and it was a glare of ice! He didn't fall once."

"Yes, and probably he went home and beat his wife with both fists," Dr. Penfold groaned; "and here am I with my good arm crippled and a book to finish on time!"

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"Couldn't you finish it with the aid of two amanuenses, Miss Dale and myself?"

"Oh, please, yes!" Barbara cried, lifting up a red face from the fire, over which she was bending to heat some water for the swollen wrist. "You must let us do the manual work."

"But you are not a mathematician, child," Dr. Penfold said in a gentle voice.

"But Mr. Waring is. What he worked out I could copy."

"Well, well. I suppose I'll manage somehow. Don't think me ungracious, but I've always done my work myself. I slipped in front of Leonard's house. His pavement is never cleaned properly. I wonder how he'd like to break his arm in the middle of his history?"

"He has already ruined his digestion, Doctor," Waring said soothingly.

"Well, I don't wish him anything worse. You're too good to me, Barbara. You're a born nurse."

"Let Miss Dale do the nursing and me the figuring, then dedicate the book to us."

"It would be too dry a tribute to your good affections. Thank you, my dear. Now, Waring, if you really mean it we'll go to work at once—to-morrow, if we can. Barbara, do you write a clear hand?"

The next two months were for Barbara the pleasantest she had known since her coming to Hallworth. In working for Dr. Penfold she seemed to live again in the past. It was only when she sat hour after hour in his study that she realized what a slight hold the University life had upon her. Even Elizabeth King and

## A RIVAL OF MATHEMATICS

the Emperor became less themselves than student types. Her class-work sank into insignificance compared with the importance of her guardian's book. That she did not fall very far behind in her studies was owing chiefly to her thorough acquaintance with Greek and Latin. In the other departments she managed to keep up with the rest, her hidden but profound indifference to the University standard of scholarship serving her, by a kind of paradox, the office of enthusiasm.

Waring, watching her during these days they were thrown so much together, wondered at her deep contentment in what to him, even with his mathematical knowledge, seemed for the most part dry and tedious work. He came to the conclusion at last that Barbara was happy because in the atmosphere of Dr. Penfold's house she was not called upon to be youthful. The obligation to be youthful had oppressed her in the life of Stafford Hall. From fulfilling this obligation she had been withheld by a long childhood spent with a middle-aged man, and by grief. Grief, Waring thought, could make even a child older than the Pyramids.

The day came at last when the book was finished, the event being celebrated by a little dinner which the author gave to his two faithful assistants. Late in the afternoon Waring and Barbara tied up the precious manuscript, sealing the cords with many splutters of aggressive scarlet wax. They agreed that the father and god-parents of the work should each have a share in addressing the package, so it went off to the express bearing Dr. Penfold's close, precise writing, Waring's larger, rounder letters, and Barbara's somewhat stiff and angular hand.

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They had champagne at the dinner, and toasted the book in more merriment than Waring had ever witnessed under Dr. Penfold's roof.

"I think I am a very fortunate person," Barbara said. "I have seen four books made and launched into the world, three of Uncle Robert's and one of Uncle Amos's."

They had called him "Uncle Amos" through these weeks of assistantship, which had been characterized for the most part by a certain friendly gaiety of spirit under the serious work of the hour. Waring was surprised, therefore, when Dr. Penfold turned to Barbara with a deprecating look.

"Please, Barbara, do not call me 'Uncle Amos' to-night. I want to feel that I am not altogether removed from your youth—yours and Waring's."

"It isn't that!" Barbara stammered, being taken wholly by surprise. "But you are so learned, and you have written such great works, and Mr. Waring and I—we have done nothing!"

"It is the sign of our admiration and affection," Waring said. "Please don't put us back to Dr. Penfold."

"Never; but you make me feel like an octogenarian, you two with your insolent youth, and I am only forty-five!"

He smiled as he spoke, but there was a note of protest in his voice which made his words serious. Waring, hiding his surprise, answered jestingly:

"Years have nothing to do with it, have they, Miss Dale! Two things preserve youth—make youth—love and enthusiasm."



## A RIVAL OF MATHEMATICS

A faint flush overspread Dr. Penfold's face. He said nothing. Barbara looked up quickly. Waring had a way of stimulating her thoughts.

"And religion!" she added.

"Why religion?" Waring asked.

"Because it has to do with eternity, and isn't the eternal always young?"

"When it is on Parnassus, yes. When it is on Calvary, no," he answered. "'Apollo's summer look' always; but the crucifix—how old in spirit Christ must have been to be willing to give himself up!"

"Waring, you're a mystic at heart."

"No; I'm only tired of mathematics to-night."

"So am I! For the first time in my life I am tired of mathematics," Dr. Penfold said, with a certain wistful accent. "I wonder what is the matter with me?" he added.

"By the same token, it's May-day," Waring said gaily. "And I vote we stop this dinner just here, and go the three of us to the knoll, to see a Spring moon-rise."

Dr. Penfold knit his brows.

"That is a good idea, Waring—but, Barbara, wouldn't it be pleasant to have Allaire, too? I can send Mehitabel in with a message. Allaire is a good walker."

"I should love to have Allaire."

"Let me go after Miss Sordello," Waring said, rising. The look of astonishment had passed from his face, but he wanted a moment for reflection. He could not understand why Dr. Penfold should send for Allaire. Surely it was not a question of chaperonage. Waring

## THE LAW OF LIFE

laughed aloud at the idea. Chaperonage had never been dreamed of during these weeks when Barbara spent hour after hour with the two men. No one had thought anything of it. No one could think anything of it. Hallworth was noted for its atmosphere of innocent freedom in social matters. Alma Mater, after warning her children not so much to forget their sex as to remember their intellects, gave no more care to the matter, being confident that the curriculum was severe enough to make large demands on the vital force, leaving only sufficient for the most harmless kind of romance. Besides, Dr. Penfold had always been regarded as a kind of impersonal product, an old scholar wedded to his work, as St. Francis had married poverty.

"And yet he's only forty-five," Waring thought. "What makes him seem so old? It must be his spirit."

He found Dutton with Allaire in the drawing-room. Dutton looked very happy and Allaire cross.

"I am glad to see you, Richard, O mon Roi," she said, holding out a languid little hand. "Your good friend Jonathan Dutton has been boring me half to death with an account of your virtues."

"Save me from my friends! Go get your hat, Allaire; I've come to take you for a moonlight walk."

"What will we do with our mutual friend?" she said, roughly glancing at Dutton.

"Oh, this isn't to be a picnic à deux, I'm sorry to say. Dr. Penfold and Barbara—Miss Dale—are coming!"

"Dr. Penfold taking a moonlight walk! Whatever has happened?"

"Is he renewing his youth?" Dutton asked.

## A RIVAL OF MATHEMATICS

"Did he ever have any to renew?" said Waring. "He's beginning his youth, I'm thinking. Dutton, run over and beg Mrs. Joyce to come with us—there's a dear fellow. She's always ready for anything."

"That will make just six."

"What a mathematician you are, Dutton! And six can be divided into three parts of two each."

"Who'll take Amos?" said Allaire, irreverently. "Oh, I will! I'm an old neighbor and I helped bring him up."

"And this is the way you speak of a member of the Royal Society!" Waring said.

"How can you stand in awe of a person you were born next door to," she answered wearily.

In a few moments Dutton and Mrs. Joyce joined them.

"You're a duck, Richard Waring," she said. "You've saved my life. Herbert was just opening my milliner's bill, and I was just telling him what an awfully nice thing the President had said about him at the Goodwin reception, when in walked Mr. Dutton, and I escaped."

"We are going to stop for Dr. Penfold and Miss Dale."

"Dr. Penfold going for a moonlight walk! Why, this is unprecedented."

"Strange, but true."

"I shall be glad to see Miss Dale again. She interested me. I understand she did a great deal of work on the book."

"She was a trump," Waring said heartily. "We got it off to-day."

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Dr. Penfold seemed pleased, but rather embarrassed, by the number of people who were to accompany him to the knoll. There was a certain shyness in his manner, as if he were not quite sure of himself.

“Will you walk with me?” he said to Barbara, in the hesitating way which for some days past she had noticed when he addressed her. “I really wish to enjoy this May-night, and with you I can be silent.”

He started off at a brisk, nervous pace. Waring, putting Mrs. Joyce’s wrap about her, looked after him in wonder.

“You see,” Allaire said, “my charitable designs were frustrated. He evidently prefers Miss Dale.”

“Run along with Mr. Dutton,” Mrs. Joyce said. “I wish to talk with Mr. Waring about the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.”

Allaire laughed. It was well known that Mrs. Joyce relieved the tedium of life at Hallworth by frank coquetries with the unmarried older students and younger members of the Faculty. She said she earned this innocent pleasure by three perfectly cooked meals, to say nothing of afternoon tea and chafing-dish suppers, offered up to her lord and master. Herbert Joyce, whose good temper was a constant witness to the reputation of his wife’s table, said that Phyllis could do what she pleased—he was too happy to care.

Her piquant brunette face was upturned now to Waring’s.

“Mr. Waring, you have the eyes of a saint, the lashes of a girl, the chin of a general and the mouth of a cynic. Was there ever a more misleading combination!”

## A RIVAL OF MATHEMATICS

"I am simplicity itself!"

"I haven't known you from your freshman year to believe that. Tell me, do you like Miss Dale?"

"Very much."

"What kind of a girl is she?"

"Many kinds, I should say."

"Please don't indulge in glittering generalities. That is always suspicious. You've certainly seen her enough these weeks to know something definite about her."

"Definite! And a woman!"

"Now, don't be sarcastic and horrid. Tell me what is she like?"

"Rather unusual, I think; old-fashioned and aristocratic—and gentle."

"Has she any life—any fire?"

"Much to warm one's hands by, I should say—none to destroy."

They walked on in silence for a moment, then Mrs. Joyce said:

"She seems to appeal to Dr. Penfold. I never knew him to notice a woman before."

Her words fitted in so exactly with his own train of thought that for a moment Waring was bewildered with the force of a new and ugly idea. He put it from him at once.

"It is impossible!" he said to himself.

"Nor I," he said aloud. "It is fortunate, since she is his ward. Her grief and her former training have had much to do with the sympathy between them, I think. They are both old in spirit."



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"Why don't you teach her to be young?" said Mrs. Joyce.

"I mistrust my powers," Waring answered coldly. The little brunette changed the subject.

The knoll was a steep hillock rising abruptly from the edge of the ravine. Its summit commanded a noble view of lake and valley and of the western hills. The moon had already risen when the little party arrived at their goal, and the landscape was flooded in the tender light. Sweet scents of the earth came faintly through the cool air.

"It is quite imperative that we now meet a nymph, clothed in diaphanous green, and with crocuses about her brow," Mrs. Joyce said gaily.

"She would have pneumonia before morning," said Waring.

"And so will we unless we keep moving," Dutton said. "This ground feels like a sponge."

"Dr. Penfold is evidently bent on exploration," said Allaire. "Let us follow him. Mrs. Joyce, will you take charge of Mr. Dutton? I wish to talk to Mr. Waring about the Origin of Species."

She took his left hand in her right, and ran down the knoll like a wild thing, but, arrived at its base, her grave manner enveloped her again.

"There's no use trying to be young," she said wearily. "Where are our guides?"

Waring paused.

"I think they went toward that clump of trees," he said. "I hope Miss Dale has her wits about her. Dr. Penfold might walk her straight into the ravine.

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A misstep of three hundred feet would probably be fatal."

"Yes; there are ugly places there."

They made their way to the edge of the gorge, serrated with long, horrid gaps and fissures in the overhanging rocks. On one of these sharp projections Dr. Penfold and Barbara were seated, apparently silent, gazing down the ravine to the moonlit valley.

"Don't let us disturb them," Allaire said dryly. "Let us sit down and watch that they don't fall over."

Mrs. Joyce and Dutton joined them.

"What made you come to this ugly spot?" she said. "Are you all contemplating suicide?"

"No; we are keeping watch on an absent-minded mathematician. It would be just like Dr. Penfold to walk into the ravine and make us all a lot of trouble."

Dr. Penfold, oblivious of the four spectators, was telling Barbara slowly, and with long pauses between, the story of his almost friendless childhood, and of his early struggles. She was listening with grave attention, sometimes interposing a word of sympathy or of admiration. The realization of what a solitary and strenuous life the man at her side had led was beginning to stir her with a strange tenderness, a new pity. She remembered how often she had heard the ready sophomoric jest about his peculiarities, and her cheeks burned with a sudden zeal of championship. What did the young, assured things, with their lives made easy for them, know of the sacrifices of scholarship, the long, painful path of achievement trodden alone, the days and nights of herculean labor? Her uncle had had a comfortable home from his boyhood. The ghost of necessity had

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never haunted the precincts of his study; but this man had starved his way through Hallworth, had done day-labor to earn his tuition.

Barbara's imagination, once aroused, was lavish in its response. Though she did not know it, the hard work of the past weeks had told upon her physically. She was tired, and therefore more ready to back her imagination with her emotions. Tears stood in her eyes now as Dr. Penfold spoke of an illness of his senior year which had threatened to imperil his hardly won success. When he had finished his story he turned to her, a gentle apology in his eyes.

"I never told this to any one before. But then there was never any one I wanted to tell it to."

A slight flush overspread Barbara's face.

"I am glad you can trust me enough to tell me."

At that moment Waring interrupted them.

"Dear Doctor," he said, "the spring nights are too chill for sitting about, and you might take cold in your arm. The others are turning back."

Dr. Penfold looked up, bewildered.

"Why, Waring," he said; "where did you come from?"

## CHAPTER X.

### THE NAPOLEONIC FLOWER.

IN the section of the country in which Hallworth was situated Spring did not come shyly and with delicate, impalpable forewarnings, but rushed in passionately with its gifts of warmth and fairy light and color. The diaphanous green veil thickened in one rich day of sunshine to summer foliage.

Dr. Penfold sat at his desk, vainly trying to fix his mind upon his work. His study windows were open, admitting a flood of light and air heavy with the scent of blossoms. Yet in this mood it seemed less physical than an uncharted wind of the spirit, bringing with it strange perfumes and memories of other lands. He reviewed his life, as he had reviewed it that first night of May for Barbara. How empty it had been after all, a barren, intellectual struggle for the unfathomable! On this soft Spring day the mysterious power of mathematics had no charm for him. He yearned for a youth he had never known.

An antique mirror hung above the fireplace. He rose and went over to it, looked at himself and blushed.

"What a fool I am!" he muttered. "There is no fool like an old fool."

The silence of the house oppressed him. To forget it he took up his work again. For twenty minutes he bent over it disconsolately, then he threw down his pen.

"It is no use," he said. "I will go for a walk with Barbara."

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Barbara experienced a keen pleasure in these walks with her guardian, which had become almost a daily occurrence of the month of May. Since the evening he had told her of his life, the emotion of pity, then born, had grown stronger and more comprehensive; inclusive, indeed, of a very real tenderness. She had a protecting feeling toward him, as toward one maimed by circumstances and deprived of some natural heritage.

"He has not even had time to look at nature," she thought, and she took a keen delight in guiding him to her favorite places through the beautiful country over which the towers of Hallworth reigned. One day, when the lake was as smooth as glass, she persuaded him to let her row him to a point from which a fine view of the University could be obtained. Arrived there they moored the little boat, and seated themselves on a fallen log in the Spring sunshine.

"I used to row Uncle Robert, when I could coax him out of his study."

"Did he not——" Dr. Penfold hesitated. "Did he not have a disappointment in his youth?"

"A woman he loved was untrue to him," Barbara said simply, as if repeating an historical statement.

"Still—he loved."

She looked up surprised. Her guardian seemed to her like a man who had never read a fairy-tale, and in consequence knew nothing of romance. Her own conception of love was linked less with her contemporaries who were marrying and giving in marriage than with forgotten castles, enchanted princesses, strange quests and magic dawns upon the fairest of all undiscovered countries. To her love was half-divine, half-fairy in



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character, touching on one side the mysterious romances of the Grail, with their wealth of mystic aspiration; on the other, the tales of enchantment, haunted by gnome and elf.

"Still—he loved," Dr. Penfold repeated, his clear blue eyes fixed upon the western sky. "It may be possible that many of us miss happiness. I sometimes think," he added, "that the only debt we owe the gods is joy. Barbara, are you happier now—at Hallworth?"

"I'm much happier since I've been of some use," she said frankly. "I was happy helping a little with the book."

"And the University? Will you wish to come back next year?"

She smiled.

"Hallworth may not want me. I may not pass all the examinations."

"Would you care much if you didn't?"

She shook her head.

"Not for myself. I should not wish to discredit you."

"Ah, that would not matter. I am sick of mere knowledge."

He looked at her wistfully, but she was gazing toward Hallworth.

A silence fell upon them. It did not seem to embarrass Barbara. She reached over and gathered some violets growing at her feet.

Suddenly Dr. Penfold spoke.

"Barbara, I love you more than I have ever loved any human being. Will you marry me?"

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She looked up, knitting her brows as if she had not heard aright. Dr. Penfold went on stumblingly.

“Will you—come to me—bring my youth to me—the youth—I never had? I am lonely.”

Then Barbara spoke.

“Do you want me—really want me?” she said earnestly.

“Do I!”

She knit her brows again, as she always did when thinking hard.

“But I am not sure that I love you enough to make you happy,” she said slowly and reflectively. “I do care very much for you—you have been good to me; but if I did not make you happy I should never forgive myself, and you would be worse off than ever.”

He smiled.

“Barbara, you could not help but make me happy!”

She looked across the shining waters of the lake.

“I wish my mother had not died. There are so many things that one can ask only one’s mother.”

“It is then—‘yes,’ Barbara?”

“Oh, do not let us talk any more about it to-day,” she said, the first emotion she had shown breaking her voice. “I want to make you happy, but do not let us talk any more about it to-day.”

“Give me a flower at least, Barbara, to keep till I may speak again.”

She drew some violets from the bunch she had gathered and handed them to him.

“They are scentless,” he said; “and were they not Napoleon’s flower, dear? Give me something else.”

She looked about her.

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"I see nothing but violets everywhere. Wait, let me see if there is not another flower in all this wood."

She wandered away from him, relieved to be a moment by herself. A line of verse she had once read went through her brain, "Oh, violets for the grave of youth." The ground was purple with them. She turned back at last.

Dr. Penfold was bending over, his gray head buried in his hands. Something in his attitude of dejection, in the premature look of age, recalled all that he had told her of his long, lonely struggles. A passionate tenderness welled up in her, swept her for a moment out of herself. She went to his side quickly.

"I could not find other flowers to give you. I must give you myself."

## CHAPTER XI.

### AN INTERLUDE.

MRS. MATURIN was giving a dinner-party to the President of Hallworth, and Waring and Perceval were among the guests. Waring had arrived late, being detained by a chance meeting, and an important conversation with Barbara which had aroused in him the sensation of losing something that he never knew he possessed. Mrs. Maturin—"Athena," as her intimate friends called her—noticed his pallor and whispered her hope that he was quite well.

"Quite well, and very much ashamed of myself for being late," he answered.

"You are to take Miss Ravenel in," said his hostess. Waring smiled.

"You are always good to me."

Between himself and Mrs. Maturin there had grown that winter a friendship untroubled by the specter of sex. All the sanity of grief was in her grave attitude toward life. The impersonal surrounded her like a sure but impalpable armor. Waring felt that of her own will and wish she made it easier for men to respect than to love her.

He was glad that he was to take Miss Ravenel in to dinner. He had once described her to Barbara as young in years, old in experience, and timeless in charm. He watched her now as she stood talking to the President, and contrasted her with the girl he had just left, who had left him with an ache of impotence in his

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breast. Miss Ravenel was a woman of the world by every token of bearing and expression. Pride, less of the intellect than of the aristocratic soul, was written in the lines of her mouth, and in the curious, fascinating eyes, with their glance which took so much and returned so little. Of her history he knew nothing, but divined that she had built up much of her charming poise on a foundation of discarded romance. He also divined that romance was continually drifting her way through the somewhat winding channels of university life. If only Barbara could have had the training of years and experience! The news which he had just heard made him sick at heart.

Miss Ravenel had evidently penetrated the armor of the President's aloof manner with some shaft of humor, or apt comment, for he was smiling grimly, as if in self-mockery of his response to her charm. Dinner being announced, Waring went up to her, and as Dr. Hunt turned away he said:

"There are some rare occasions when a mere post-graduate has the advantage of a university president. This is one of them."

"It is I who am honored," she answered, smiling. "The President has just told me that 'the mere post-graduate' obtained his doctorate to-day, by one of the most brilliant examinations on record. I congratulate you, Mr. Waring."

"And now 'ease after toil.' I do believe Mrs. Maturin gives her charming dinners in the character of a philanthropist. At least she accomplishes the same end."

"I am glad you believe in social charities to one's



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peers. The prevailing opinion seems to be that one must go slumming to make others happy—what a beautiful table!”

“Russian violets and orchids! If it is charity, it is most subtly expressed.”

“As charity should be—a kind of moral caress.”

The soft light from the embowered candles, the elusive perfumes from the flowers, from the dresses of the women, began to quiet his spirit, and to render the events of the day dream-like, the long tiring examination, the meeting with Barbara and the news of her engagement.

The party was small enough to admit of general conversation, and the talk drifted to the case of a student, a junior, who had been recently expelled, and to whom his class had rallied as one man in a petition for his reinstatement.

“If the University were a Sunday-school or a social club,” Dr. Hunt was saying dryly, “we should be obliged by inexorable logic to keep him. As it is neither, we fulfil our greatest responsibility to Hallworth by turning him out.”

“Then you do not believe in student discipline?” Mrs. Maturin said.

“Not in the least. If they are in need of discipline from the University they are not in need of a university education.”

Perceval smiled.

“It is good to have at least one well-defined division of those who are not in need of a university education—would there were more!”

“College students have altogether too many privi-

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leges," Professor Cartwright said. "They come to think themselves exempt from ordinary decencies. A young man behaves like a ruffian, and his entire class rally to him, because he's a classmate and a fraternity brother."

"The sentimentalisms of American college life are the chief foes to a true college spirit," Dr. Hunt said.

The President of Hallworth was a man of profound scholarship, and, to the students, of eccentric personality. Yet though they resented his ill-concealed indifference to their dear ideals, they respected him because of his unwavering justice and his absolute independence of their favor. His somewhat medieval and intense conception of scholarship and its solitary joys appealed to them in spite of themselves. Besides, the young things forgave much to a man who knew the fine breeds of dogs as well as he knew his special subject, early Greek poetry. A splendid litter of bull-pups, sired by the President's English bull Melampus, had been the latest bond between Dr. Hunt and the student body; and when the president of the senior class had been presented with the finest of the litter, the glee-club in deep gratitude had serenaded the head of Hallworth. Dr. Hunt, smoking a black cigar in his study, heard the strains of "Drink, puppy, drink," beneath his window, and smiled over his Theocritus, but he made no sign.

"You will not take Williams back, then?" Mrs. Joyce said daringly

"Certainly not."

"But the junior class?"

"I would expel the entire class first. And, by the way, that class boasts an artist. He made a most clever

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caricature of me and pinned it up on the Monroe Hall bulletin-board. I was fortunate enough to see it, and I have sent it to Moore to be mounted and framed."

"Was there no clue to the caricaturist?"

"Only the figures of the junior year. I should like to insert a line in the Hallworth *Chronicle* inviting him to dinner. I should then advise him to go straight to Paris—lend him the money if necessary."

"It was so good?"

"Inimitable."

"Speaking of students," said Mrs. Joyce, turning to Perdita Ravenel, "did you know that Miss Dale is to marry her guardian, Dr. Penfold?"

Mrs. Maturin looked toward the speaker in astonishment.

"Marry Dr. Penfold! That little girl. It can't be possible!"

"In the line of marriage nothing ever surprises me," Mrs. Joyce said. "All laws break down there."

A shadow came into Mrs. Maturin's face.

"Except the law of love," she said, half under her breath.

Perceval, who had been gazing at her, unconscious of his act, now turned away his eyes. A realization swept over him of the finality of his hostess's past. She did not belong to the class of women who seek to reproduce a unique experience, and because of this there should be some in outer darkness.

"Tell us, Mr. Waring, is this true?" Mrs. Cartwright was saying. "I believe you know Miss Dale quite well."

Waring answered stiffly. He was conscious of trying

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to hide something, he scarcely knew what—to appear indifferent.

“Is it true?” said Miss Ravenel.

“It is true. I congratulated Miss Dale this afternoon.”

“The marriage will never come off. Dr. Penfold will forget, as he did before.”

“If happiness is conducive to presence of mind the marriage will come off,” Dr. Hunt said. “I saw Dr. Penfold this morning.”

“Well, I hope he will be happy,” said Mrs. Cartwright. “He has had a hard life—a lonely life.”

“But she is so young!” said Miss Ravenel. “Only twenty, isn’t she? And very young for her years.”

“Oh, age counts nothing,” said Mrs. Joyce.

“I don’t agree with you,” Waring said impetuously. “All marriages between ill-assorted ages should be forbidden by law.”

“I should say, instead,” said Mrs. Cartwright dryly, “that the law should forbid all marriages between people of ill-assorted souls.”

Dr. Hunt smiled.

“A magnificent plan for depopulating the world!”

“Who should be the judges of the qualified souls?” Mrs. Maturin asked, the faint shadow still in her face.

“The happiest people,” said Mrs. Joyce.

“No; those who have suffered most,” Mrs. Cartwright said.

“You are both wrong,” Perdita interposed. “The judges should be those with the keenest sense of humor.”

“To supply the chief deficiency of the lovers?” War-

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ing asked, his words less a question to the woman at his side than a sop to something snarling within him.

“Come, come,” Mrs. Maturin said; “I cannot allow such a riot of cynicism. Mr. Perceval, will you help me bring these people to order?”

Perceval smiled.

“I am only afraid of the silences of my friends. Since they have spoken they are safe.”

“Ah, that is the principle which justifies the confessional!”

Waring sipped his wine and thought of Barbara. He wished that for one day he could be her brother.

Going home from Mrs. Maturin's he met Dutton, and the pent-up astonishment and indignation in his breast burst out.

“Married to Penfold! To Penfold, that mathematical machine.”

“He's only forty-five.”

“He's got a soul as old as the Pyramids. He's waked up for the instant, yes—he liked her companionship, her help with that confounded book. He's stirred for a while with the first emotion of his life—and she's the victim.”

“But surely he's not compelling her to marry him.”

“Look here, Dutton, you know Barbara Dale—brought up by a man, a recluse, as unworldly as she is. From him she comes straight to Penfold's charge. She doesn't care for that zoo, that woman's hall. She sees her old life, the life she loved best, somehow reproduced at Penfold's. She's at her ease there. He asks her to marry him, and straight to him she goes, thinking it's the same kind of life. She must think that,” Waring



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said helplessly. "She has deep affection for him, that I know—that she has nothing else I know too. I spoke to her this afternoon. Don't you see the hateful logic of it? She doesn't know what she is doing!"

"Who's to tell her?" Dutton said anxiously.

Waring smiled in spite of himself.

"There's nobody to tell her. She knows no woman well here, and if she did what in thunder could a woman say to a girl like Miss Dale?"

"But they may be happy," said Dutton, who was always disposed to look at things cheerfully.

"Oh, yes; but she has twenty years of youth to dispose of, while Penfold is dealing with his middle age."

"Perhaps she will have children," said Dutton, still pursuing the optimistic line of thought.

Waring groaned.

"Go home and go to bed, Dutton, before I slay you in the path. For the sake of your class in chemistry go at once."

Barbara was sitting alone in her room reading a little book of prayers which her uncle had once given her because of their pure and stately English. The emotions of the past week had aroused a latent mysticism in her, a longing to pray. Against the wide, dim background of the pantheistic beliefs in which she had been reared, a young and visionary face formed itself again and again. It bore a likeness to the face of Christ once seen in an old print.

She closed the book at last, and going to the window, looked up at the stars. Where had they gone, the souls of her parents—the soul of her uncle? Did they still

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exist? And if indeed they were alive, were they lonely? Or did some hand beckon them to a home, a place, an ingle-nook in the universe? Who was their Host?—the immanent God!—how often her uncle had used that phrase, turning wistfully from the anthropomorphic gods of the multitude, lest he should miss a rarer divinity! To-night the vague, philosophical deity of Bruno, of Spinoza, brought no comfort. A literal and childish longing seized her for a god visible and tangible, nailed where one could touch him, bound fast to the material world by a cross of wood and iron nails. She turned out the light and sank upon her knees at the bedside.

She remained crouching there long after the desire to pray had passed and the Face had faded. Despite her efforts to escape it, the haunting sense that this new relation with Dr. Penfold was not for her a true one was now full upon her. In a moment's impulse she had pledged herself to marry him. Her word was given. The most sacred of all promises had passed from her into his keeping. Yet now she longed to turn back. The very promise itself had cleared her vision. During these last days she had caught herself again and again thinking that she must write to her uncle and ask him to let her come home. Then she remembered! She must go forward into the new life. By every law of her training a promise lightly or gravely given was already fulfilled. The possibility of telling Dr. Penfold the truth, of asking him to give her back her impulsive word, never even occurred to her. What she had said she had said; and the dim fear in her heart was no messenger of release. Between the

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old world of her childhood gone forever and the new world of Hallworth she had fallen, and he had caught her to his breast. To-night she felt like one in a trap, suffocated, and, by her own act, helpless.

She rose from her knees and turned on the light again. She had sent word to the Emperor and Elizabeth to come to her, with the intention of announcing her engagement to them. She looked in the mirror, dreading lest her face should betray her.

A knock came at the door, and the Emperor entered.

"I am honored," she said. "The situations are reversed at last, and Barbara is seeking me."

"I always wish to see you, Helena," Barbara said gravely.

"Elizabeth sends word she cannot come to-night, but will see you the first thing in the morning. What is the matter? You look fagged!"

"I may be tired, but I am very happy," Barbara said, uttering the first deliberate lie of her life. "I have sent for you to tell you why."

"To tell me why you are happy! This must be something unusual."

"It is. I am engaged to Dr. Penfold. We are—we are to be married in August."

The Emperor regarded her a moment with her steady, impenetrable gaze, but the brightness of her eyes seemed dimmed. Then she lifted Barbara's hand, that she had taken, to her lips and kissed it, turning in the same instant away.

"I've forgotten something," she said, in a curious, restrained voice. "A telephone message I promised to

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send. I'm coming back to say all kinds of lovely things to you, little Barbara."

But she did not return.

Late that night Miss Ravenel, still wearing her dinner-dress, was seated in her bed-room looking over some letters. Her face wore an amused expression, due perhaps to some lingering memories of the conversation at Mrs. Maturin's dinner. Her surface sympathy was with the comedy of life. The luxury of tragedy she rarely indulged in.

There was a knock at her door. To her indifferent "Come in" it opened slowly. Barbara Dale stood in the doorway, looking like a little girl in her long white dressing-gown, with her hair in a braid down her back. Her face was white and tragic. In her eyes was a half-frightened expression that Perdita saw even through the twilight of the room.

She rose and drew the girl in.

"Are you ill—Barbara?"

Barbara shivered.

"No, not ill. You will think it very strange of me to come to you—this way; but I—but I—did you ever have a sudden horror of being alone?"

"What sane person hasn't?" Perdita said, the ghost of a smile on her lips. She was beginning to understand.

"It was so with me to-night, and I came to you. I thought you could understand—anything—anything!"

Her voice broke. The overwrought note was in it, but Perdita's quick understanding went back of the note, went back of her own astonishment at the girl's words. The comedy was suddenly luminous, and by its light she

## AN INTERLUDE

saw a soul struggling under the weight of some incommunicable burden. She drew the girl to a divan.

“Let me tuck you up warm here while I read you a fairy-tale. No, don’t say a word! I have known fairy-tales to change the fate of nations. There you are—a good, obedient child!”

She read her the story of the Princess and the Wild Swans. Barbara lay staring at the ceiling, but by and by the tense look on her face faded, and the old smile of childhood came back.





**BOOK SECOND**

**THE WIFE.**

1750-1755

1756-1760

## CHAPTER XII.

### A FOUNDATION-STONE.

THE town of Sparta lay at the foot of the hill on which Hallworth University was built. That it had existed before the University was ever thought of was its chief claim to distinction.

It still bore traces of its early dormant period. The one business street had lengthened two or three blocks since the foundation of Hallworth. Houses and stores had been built to meet the needs of the little army which descended upon Sparta in September and broke camp in June. A trolley-line had been established, an intricate affair which looped the hill and valley with many switches, involving long intervals of repose. But aside from these changes the town retained its old-time quiet look. The elm-shaded streets stretched away to the hills and the lake. The white-painted, green-shuttered houses, and the more pretentious residences of stone and brick, still gave the impression of solidity and venerable ease, untroubled by the nervous influences of University existence.

On a bright October afternoon, a year after Waring's return to Hallworth, the business street of the town swarmed with students. Between two and three was a favorite hour for a raid upon the shops for every kind of commodity, from the new novels to sweaters. A large bookstore, centrally situated, was a sort of general intelligence office for University news and gossip. Pro-

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fessors and students waited there for the recalcitrant trolley. The latest novels and magazines were always on show. Announcements of amusements, games and meetings were posted in conspicuous places.

One announcement hanging there had been supplemented that morning by a liberal distribution on the campus and at the doors of the students' dwelling-houses of small handbills which had been read with every variety of serious and frivolous comment. A group was gathered now about the impressive poster in the bookstore. Its message, gaining more dignity from the wide margins, red capitals and antique black type than the little bills could lend, was to the effect that a meeting would be held in the opera-house that afternoon for the purpose of forming a Students' Political League and founding a magazine, conducted by the students, to voice the opinions of the League on current political topics. By whose authority these events were to transpire the poster omitted to say.

A sophomore, the centre of a group, wanted to know whether the unknown responsible for the poster thought the University a "damned ladies' club."

"No gentleman meddles with politics," said an irreproachable fraternity man.

"You American gentlemen may be sorry some day that you didn't meddle with politics."

The fraternity man wheeled about sharply, then, when he saw who the speaker was, his manner changed to one of deference.

"You think this League a good idea, Professor Chalfonte?"

Professor Chalfonte put on his monocle and read the



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poster through before answering. He was an Englishman lately elected to the chair of European Literature.

"My dear boy—of course."

"Heresy!" said a deep voice behind them. The speaker, Professor Sordello, was also a foreigner, and he brought out the "r" with a peculiar roll. "What do half-baked youngsters know about American politics?"

"But you'll admit that the politics of this country are intricate enough to call for special study."

"There's but one key to them—money," Professor Leonard's grating voice said from a corner where he was examining some books. "Young gentlemen," he added, turning to the group of students, "unless you hope some day to control a trust you'd better keep out of politics."

A laugh went up.

"Who's responsible for this announcement?" Chalfonte asked.

"It sounds like our young friend Waring," Sordello answered.

"He could conduct such a piece of tomfoolery wisely if any one could," Leonard said.

"Well, they'd better be scribbling callow political articles than breaking their bones on Washington Field," said Chalfonte.

The President of Hallworth strode in at that moment with a huge hound at his heels. He responded to the greetings of the professors, then, seeing where their attention had been directed, he stopped and read the poster. His look of amusement was his only comment.

The trolley-car coming along at that crisis, the men

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took their departure, with the exception of Professor Sordello.

"I think I'll slip around to the opera-house and see if I'm not right, if it is not our young friend Waring," he said blandly.

It was close on to four o'clock, the hour set for the meeting, when Sordello reached the opera-house, and saw with some amusement a number of women among the stream of students entering.

"The ladies confirm my suspicions. It is undoubtedly our good-looking young friend Waring," he said, in his soft, rolling voice. "Ah, Allaire, are you interested in politics, my child?"

His daughter gave him a cool little look.

"I am interested in anything Richard Waring undertakes," she said lightly, with a shrug of her shoulders. Then she preceded her father up the steps. In the lobby Dutton joined her.

"I'm so glad you've come, Allaire."

"Don't be too sure of me. I've no bouquets for your hero."

"If we escape eggs we're lucky. The freshmen are here in full force. Do you hear them?"

"I have ears."

"Waring will manage 'em. He has a way with him."

Allaire nodded.

"You needn't worry about eggs. But what's his object? Is he in earnest?"

"Never more so. The magazine's already an established fact, whether the League goes or not. The first number comes out next week."

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“What’s the name?”

“*College and State*. Waring’s editor-in-chief, with a staff made up of men from the four classes and one or two post-graduates.”

“Is Waring aspiring to the Presidency of Hallworth or to the Presidency of the United States?”

Dutton laughed.

“He is going ahead pretty fast, isn’t he! An assistant professorship at the first stroke. Shall I find you a seat?”

“Thanks, no; for I shall want to run away if it’s dull. What are you—usher-in-chief?”

“No; useful man and ejector of turbulent youth.”

The house was already two-thirds full. The girl-students had massed themselves in the front of the orchestra. Back of them were some members of Waring’s fraternity, the most exclusive in the University. The gallery was occupied chiefly by freshmen, who made known their presence in songs, catcalls and exhortations to Waring to appear at once, on pain of their sore displeasure.

Among the girls the Emperor and Elizabeth King were prominent. With the latter was a slender, blond youth with remarkable blue eyes, keen enough until they turned upon Elizabeth. Then their expression softened and deepened.

At the stroke of four Waring stepped upon the stage. Allaire, who had not seen him since the University opened, thought he looked rather thin and worn, as if he had been working too hard.

“Richard Waring’s been overdoing. Where did he spend the summer?”

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"In New York, substituting for his former editor-in-chief."

"One would think he'd been fasting in a monastery. He looks positively Gothic."

"You'll lose that impression in a minute if those freshmen keep on."

The gallery had saluted Waring as William J. Bryan. They were now making too much noise for him to speak. He looked at them a moment in a detached kind of way, as if puzzling over what to do with them; then in a clear voice, which he managed to throw just above the uproar, he said:

"Any freshman whose nurse is waiting outside may go."

A burst of laughter restored the equilibrium of the audience. The freshmen subsided, influenced partly by Waring's voice and partly by his manner. They had expected enthusiasm, which they could guy with great propriety, and they found instead nonchalance.

"I will not keep you long," he said. "A number of us have decided to bring out a magazine which will be devoted exclusively to contemporary political topics in this our country, which will emphasize the significance of such topics to university men. I'll not say much about the magazine. We expect the first number to set forth our aims pretty clearly. What I want to talk about this afternoon is the organization of a kind of League to discuss political questions at a meeting once a month, say, and incidentally to back up the magazine and contribute to it. The League will stand for no party, but it hopes to follow the movements of the two great parties and the developments of the present

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administration. Its object is to promote a more intelligent understanding of the political issues of the hour, and to deepen the sense of responsibility which educated men especially should feel in their capacity as voting citizens."

He went on to speak of the lack of organic relationship between the university and the State in this country. He said nothing very memorable or original, but the indefinable influence of personality gave weight to his words. The enthusiasm of the audience rose little wave by little wave, until its full force gathered in a sudden cheering and clapping. During the pause which followed Waring invited criticism.

"Are the ladies eligible for membership?" said a sarcastic voice in the gallery.

"Certainly. One young lady from the senior class is on our editorial staff."

"Name! Name!"

Waring looked at the Emperor and she nodded assent.

"Miss Helena Dare."

A round of applause followed.

"Business details," demanded another voice.

"These Mr. Frederick Clyde will explain to you."

The young man who sat by Elizabeth now took the floor.

"Don't be deceived into thinking it's a sophomoric scheme because that youngster is on the stage," Dutton whispered to Allaire. "Waring's giving them rope to get the thing started, make it popular, you know; but the real leaders are to be some of the best men in the University, and several Senators who knew Waring's



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father have promised to contribute articles. He has a splendid one already on the Filipinos."

"It doesn't seem like Richard to organize," Allaire said. "I always thought he was a solitary soul at the core of him."

"I think he is down deep."

"It's just as well not to have the 'a-lonely' feeling," Allaire said, with a wistful intonation. "This is better."

She nodded toward the audience, the majority of whom had reached that pitch of enthusiasm when they really believed the future of the nation was in their hands.

"It has been a great success," Waring said to Dutton half an hour later, as they went down the steps of the opera-house. "Over two hundred were enrolled this afternoon. Now I'm going to Perceval to see if he'll be chaplain."

"Chaplain!"

"You don't remember our pleasantries at Mrs. Maturin's—that Perceval should be chaplain to the University? That isn't possible, but we'll have him chaplain to our League."

Dutton looked curiously at Waring. He was never quite sure his friend was speaking in earnest.

"You'll come with me, Dutton?"

"Gladly. I haven't seen Perceval since last June."

The Rectory of St. Jude's was built against the church. Virginia creeper, now in brilliant autumn coloring, overran both buildings and smothered the narrow Gothic windows.

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"We'll have him father confessor to the League," Waring said with boyish gaiety as he rang the bell.

"I believe he's that now to half the students."

The housekeeper ushered them into the shadowy drawing-room. Its bare walls were unadorned save by one large painting, a splendid copy of the St. Justina of Moretto da Brescia. Waring paused before it.

"If one could know a woman like that one would kneel as the Duke does."

"One couldn't waltz with a saint," said Dutton.

"There'd be a few people left to waltz with."

Perceval entered at that moment.

"You like the St. Justina? Maturin brought it to me from abroad. How are you, Waring?"

"Tired. I wrote you of my League. Well, the thing's hatched, and I want you to be chaplain."

"Chaplain?"

"My private name for your services. We want you to address a meeting occasionally, and write something for the magazine—show you're with us, in short."

"Come into the library."

He led the way into a large room well-furnished with books. Theological works were conspicuous by their absence. Historical and scientific works, many of them in German, lined the walls, with a sprinkling of biography and modern fiction. A copy of Leonardo's drawing of the Head of Christ hung over the fireplace, but the other pictures were photographs of the Roman ruins and of ancient Greek statuary.

Perceval drew up chairs before the wood fire and opened a box of cigars.

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"Tell me in detail about it. You didn't explain in the letter."

Waring launched into his subject with an enthusiasm which he had not thought wise to show at the meeting. Perceval listened with close attention, now and then nodding approval.

"And we want you to help us a little," Waring said in conclusion. "The students have great respect for your authority, and your having been a lawyer will give what you say more weight."

Perceval smiled.

"The greatest weight in such an organization is personality, and I think you have quite enough of that, Waring, to carry it along alone."

"But you'll help us?" Dutton said.

Waring looked curiously at the priest, and wondered if at last he were to run across a limitation in Perceval's nature. He had always expected the virus of ecclesiasticism to manifest itself sooner or later in his friend's character, and he had always been disappointed agreeably. Perceval was the man before he was the priest. What cataclysm of the spirit—or the flesh—had driven him into the cassock Waring could not imagine; but he placed him in the St. Augustine category of saints—made, not born.

"But you'll help us?"

Perceval flicked the ashes from his cigar.

"Dear boy, they don't need me in that way—if they need me in any."

"'Render under Cæsar'?—you don't believe in the Church meddling in politics?" Waring said, with an effort to keep the disappointment out of his voice.

## A FOUNDATION-STONE

“Not in the least.”

“But you’re so modern, Perceval, and isn’t that a medieval idea?”

Perceval smiled.

“The pontificates of some of the medieval popes would scarcely bear you out.”

He leaned over, and laid his hand for a moment lightly on the younger man’s shoulder.

“I think it’s a splendid scheme. I’ll give you all the help I can privately; but don’t you see I can’t take an active part in it?”

“Because——” Waring paused and looked the rest of the question.

“Because they might want to come to me for other things—and one must have the way clear.”

“I see—I see,” Waring said. “It’s all right,” but his voice was disturbed. Above all men he hated to make a blunder.

They talked on indifferent subjects for a few moments, then the two men rose to go. As Waring said good-by Perceval gave him a frank look.

“You understand, dear fellow?”

Waring smiled.

“Maybe I will understand some day when—when I wish to come to you myself.”

When the door had closed upon them Perceval went into the drawing-room and seated himself where he could see the last pale light upon the St. Justina.

“So she would look at one,” he thought, “should one in love approach her—from an immeasurable distance.”

A look of suffering dimmed the clearness of his face.

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His mind went back over his life, step by step, until the tragedy—there he hesitated and drew back.

“It is judgment,” he said wearily. “The man who kills the thing he loves will himself be slain. It is judgment that now I shall love without hope.”

He buried his face in his hands, as if to shut out two visions. When he looked up again darkness had hidden the picture.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE BRIDE.

WARING, when Dutton left him, turned his steps toward Dr. Penfold's house. Although a fortnight had passed since his return to Hallworth he had not yet called upon Barbara, whom, by the utmost stretch of the imagination, he could not conceive of in the bridal character. Her act had made her a stranger to him, and his lingering resentment of what he deemed an unnatural marriage dulled his desire to begin the acquaintance with this new person. Only if he found her unhappy, dazed or regretful—as in all decency she ought to be—could he forgive her.

Mehitabel opened the door. Her grim face relaxed at the sight of him, and exercising her privilege of long service, she greeted him warmly.

"Mrs. Penfold will be real glad to see you, such a stranger as you are! She's entertaining callers in the parlor."

The announcement that there were other guests was welcome. Three women were with Barbara—Mrs. Maturin, Mrs. Joyce and Helena Dare, who evidently had been telling them of the League.

"Here's Mr. Waring to speak for himself," the hostess said, rising and coming forward with her hand outstretched. She looked into his face with a frank, direct gaze. Her smile of welcome showed genuine pleasure that he had come.

Waring, somewhat taken back by her self-possession,

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murmured a few words of congratulation; then, after greeting the others, seated himself by Mrs. Maturin, hoping to escape the mischievous onslaught which he saw stealing toward him from the depths of Mrs. Joyce's brown eyes.

"Mr. Waring, I have a bone to pick with you!" she said. "While you were forming a League, why didn't you form one for the benefit of unhappy wives of men of genius, open to all women of the Faculty circle, and inaugurate it with a cotillon—object, the extinction of boredom; dues, two dinners a season from each member, and only bachelors invited?"

Waring laughed.

"A league for the promulgation of romance? No. I wouldn't stop at a league, if I were undertaking such an enterprise; I'd found a whole university for emotional education."

"And give degrees to the most charming?" said the Emperor. "There is room for such a propaganda in Stafford Hall."

"But who could judge of the most charming?" Mrs. Maturin said. "One of the most fascinating women I ever knew did not appeal in the least to a third friend, upon whose response to charm I had always counted."

"What is charm, Mrs. Penfold?" Mrs. Joyce said, turning with airy challenge to Barbara, who had been listening in silent sympathy.

"Yes, give us a definition," said Waring, "of this elusive quality."

Barbara flushed.

"I don't know—I should call it—happy mystery."

Mrs. Joyce clapped her hands.

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“Bravo! Mrs. Penfold—something which gives us joy, yet conceals the method.”

“Your nesselrode puddings, for instance,” said Waring.

Mrs. Joyce rose.

“I am going. I never did attempt a flight but some one clipped my wings, and down I came with a thud.”

The others rose also. In the moment to himself which their good-bys to Barbara gave him he had an opportunity to study her face. It was his theory that the change of marriage must work some kind of a transformation in the personality of a woman. The maid and matron were sundered by the bottomless gulf of the primeval instinct. The Barbara of the year before was an obliterated entity; this Barbara must know the ugliest or the divinest fact of the universe, and knowing it must be spiritually a changeling. Gazing at her he was conscious of a certain atmosphere about her, which failing to solve, he returned to her physical characteristics. Her face was clear and pale, her eyes darker and larger than his memory of them, her lips full and red. Her expression was calm and sweet, but distinctly passive. Her very self-possession was to Waring a sign of her perfect submission to the experience of wifehood, and he could not reconcile it with his previous knowledge of her character. That she should become engaged to Penfold had seemed to him a weak, pointless action on her part; but he had explained it by her ignorance of love and of the significance of marriage. That she should now appear so complacent aroused his harshest judgment. Was she after all a girl of shallow soul, glad of a home and a position, and not the frank, strong spirit he had thought

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her? Yet something cried in him that he was unfair, and it was with a look almost of remorse that he turned to her when they were alone.

"We had expected you before this," were her first words. "Amos was wondering yesterday why you did not call."

She spoke her husband's name easily and without self-consciousness.

"I have had so many things to attend to," Waring stammered; "or I should have given myself—the—the—pleasure several days ago."

"Is it too late to congratulate you on your assistant professorship?" she said, smiling. "Dr. Penfold says he is the most to be congratulated."

"That is too good of him. He always sees his friends magnified through his own merits."

"You will stay to dinner, of course."

"I should be most happy."

He was beginning to realize that her self-possession was that of the old child-like Barbara, quite at home in a house she knew well, and barely conscious as yet of her own changed position there. But Waring was puzzled.

She left him a moment to give orders. He looked about the room for bridal touches. The furniture was unchanged, but vases and bowls of flowers were everywhere. Some books lay on the center-table. He opened one at random, which proved to be a Milton, bearing her uncle's book-plate. Evidently she had brought some things from her old home.

When she returned Waring was deep in White's Selborne. "What a beautiful edition!" he said. "Is this from your uncle's library?"



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"Yes; but the majority are up-stairs in my room. His historical library was left to Harvard, but the other books to me. We—were at Kingsbrook—after—after the wedding. I shall keep the house for a summer place, but I wanted my own things here."

"You were—you were married the seventh of September, were you not?"

"Yes; very quietly at Kingsbrook. I spent the summer there with my old nurse. You were in New York, were you not?"

"Yes; substituting on a paper."

"But you shouldn't have worked all summer," she said, with sweet solicitude.

"It was necessary. Lady Poverty and I have long been wedded."

His resentment against her had faded. Something gentle, virginal and pure surrounded her, as in the old days, combined with a new element of responsibility, which seemed to give her the poise she had lacked during her year at Hallworth. Yet was this a new element? Was it not regained, an assumption of what her girlhood had stood for, the care of an old scholar, of a quiet house? Waring seemed to himself to be making the acquaintance less of a new Barbara than of the child of Kingsbrook.

Dr. Penfold came in soon after and greeted him warmly.

"We thought you had quite forgotten us, Richard. You came just in time to be forgiven. Barbara, my dear, you have asked Mr. Waring to stay to dinner?"

"Mrs. Penfold's hospitality has already made me sure of pardon."



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"Then you are staying. That is good. I have a hundred questions to ask you. We shall have a most interesting Faculty meeting to-morrow, and you must be sure to come to give your vote against the diversion of the library fund."

"I want to know more about that," Waring said.

He watched his host as he talked, and thought that he looked more youthful than he had ever seen him. His eyes were bright and there was a faint color in his cheeks. He seemed boyishly happy and animated, and when he looked at Barbara this expression of happiness deepened.

Once when she left the room for a moment he broke off suddenly to say:

"You have not congratulated me, and I am the most fortunate man in the whole Faculty. She is like a spirit of peace in this house. I understand now what loneliness is. It is what I had for twenty years in Hallworth."

"I do congratulate you. Mrs. Penfold is not—not like other women."

"Heaven be praised, no!" Dr. Penfold said, with the narrowness of the newly married man. "She seems made to fill in the pauses of one's work, never to interrupt it. It is what I should call a genius for domesticity."

Waring said nothing. In his own mind he could not reconcile this enthusiasm with Barbara's somewhat negative peace and poise. Could it be possible that the relationship was after all platonic, conscious on his side, unconscious on hers? The resentment of her being happy, again rose in his soul and teased him. She had

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made an unnatural marriage; founded on affection, yes, but certainly not on love, and yet everything was apparently beatific.

Dinner was the same simple function it had been in the bachelor days, except that the table was adorned with flowers. Barbara, in a gray gown, looked nun-like and sweet. She did not talk much, but gave her attention to her husband and Waring, keeping close watch the while of their needs. After the meal the two men went to Dr. Penfold's study to smoke. Waring was restless, however, and took his leave early. After he had gone Barbara came to the study door.

"You are going to work?" she said.

"For a while, yes," he answered. "What are you going to do, Barbara?"

"Read a little in my room—arrange the books, perhaps."

"I will join you there soon," he said. She turned from him.

"Barbara——"

She faced him again.

"Are you happy, dear?"

"Very happy," she said gravely. "I think—I think God has given me my childhood back again."

Her husband turned his head quickly away.

She went to her room. It had been her happiness to arrange it as far as was possible like her old bedroom at Kingsbrook. Low shelves of books lined the walls. Above them hung her favorite pictures, the Dante and Beatrice of Ary Scheffer, some of Sir Joshua Reynolds's children, and one or two drawings of Leonardo's. A few growing plants were in the seats of the white-cur-

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tained windows, and about the narrow iron bed was the screen which had been the delight of her nursery days. It bore a solemn procession of Mother Goose's children, and in the panels below a baby Pierrot, in cap and bells, read fairy-tales to an attentive black cat, a dear and wise Grimalkin, while other clownlings played with their papered hoops. Her desk stood in one corner, with its little furnishings of russia leather, shabby from long use.

Barbara sat down contentedly by it and opened the catalogue she was making of her small collection. Her happiness was very real these days. The vague dread which had filled her all those summer months, making her seem strange to herself, had vanished after the wedding, under the influence of her husband's gentleness. The solemn promise to be a wife, which she knew she had given under impulse, was after all not such a weighty thing, involving responsibilities she was unable to perform. Her affection for her husband had deepened and widened during those sunny September days in her old home, where she reviewed with him every association of her childhood, from their row on the river to their attendance at the old Unitarian church, where the Dale family had had a pew for generations.

Of her new social relations she had thought but little. The Faculty women had called on her, and she looked forward to taking part some day in that life of Hallworth of which she had had a glimpse at Mrs. Maturin's; but as yet she was perfectly content within the four walls of her husband's quiet house. That it was also her house she scarcely realized.

She tired of the catalogue at last, and began a re-

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arrangement of the pictures. She decided to hang the Dante and Beatrice above her bed.

She was seated on the side of her bed, viewing the effect, when her husband entered.

"Well, dear, did you fix the books to your satisfaction?"

"I found they were terribly in need of dusting, and I was afraid of ruining my new gown. I shall overhaul them to-morrow.

Dr. Penfold looked along the shelves.

"I see you have a Swinburne."

"Yes."

"Do you care for him?"

"No."

"Do you know him well?"

"I suppose I should not judge. I have read him but little."

Her husband seated himself in a low chair.

"Come and sit by me, Barbara. Would you like me to read to you?"

"Indeed, yes, if you can spare the time."

"I will read you the story of Yseulte—and—and of Yseulte of the White Hand."

She sat for a long time hearing the music of the words without much thought of their meaning. At last it took hold of her, and she realized that the beauty was sweeping on into tragedy.

Then came the story of Yseulte of the White Hand, of the mock marriage, and the brothers' anger. Dr. Penfold's voice quavered a little, and Barbara, listening, was vaguely oppressed. She wished that her husband would put away the book. The story hurt her, aroused

## THE LAW OF LIFE

that fear which had shadowed the summer days. Unhappy mystery had no charm, but its influence seemed to quicken her brain. What dream had she been living in? Had she wilfully shut her eyes to everything but the friendly companionship? She leaned forward under the weight of her perplexity, her elbows on her knees, her forehead propped in her hands.

Her husband suddenly closed the book, and putting his arm about her waist, drew her to him. She kept her face turned away, and he was conscious that she trembled.

"Barbara."

"Yes," she said, in a low voice.

"You are not afraid of m<sup>ê</sup>, dear?"

"No."

"I am going to say something which you—may not understand. You said that God had given you back your childhood. That is good, but it cannot be all. You must go forward into a new life, new experiences—I trust new joys."

"Yes," she said piteously.

"You are now," he said slowly and hesitatingly, "you are now like Yseulte of the White Hand. Do you see?"

She sat motionless as an image, the pallor in her face deepening. The silence closing in around them seemed pregnant with life and death. At last she rose and faced him.

"I am your wife," she said solemnly. "I must—I will go forward to that new life you speak of—whatever it is."

She looked at him steadily, but her gaze was strained.



## THE BRIDE

He hid his eyes for a moment.

“You must learn to love me, Barbara,” he said in a low voice, which had a note of pathetic appeal.

His head was bowed, and as she gazed at him for the last time from the immeasurable distance of her girlhood, the vision of his lonely life and early struggle rose before her.

“I do love you,” she cried. “Indeed I do.”

The wave of tenderness which had carried her to his arms on that June day bore her there again. He opened them wide to receive her.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### "ATHENA."

PERCEVAL was seated in Mrs. Maturin's drawing-room awaiting his hostess. In his hands was the first number of Waring's magazine, "*College and State*, a monthly review of American politics, published in the interest of the higher education."

The priest smiled as he glanced at the ambitious cover, which bore in dull blues and browns an allegorical figure of a woman, presumably "Truth," against a background of conventionalized towers, presumably those of Hallworth University. The smile deepened as he turned over the pages of thick white paper, with absurdly generous margins, noting the impression of seriousness and weight conveyed by the very make-up of the magazine. All the lavishness of youthful ambition was in the venture.

He looked at the list of contents. It began bravely with an article on the Filipinos by a well-known Senator. Waring's own name was next in line, subjoined to "The Relation of the Earliest American Colleges to the Colonies." An article on Trusts followed.

"I am glad you have brought a copy of Mr. Waring's magazine," Mrs. Maturin said, as she held out her hand. "Come into the library and let me give you a cup of tea, while you tell me about it."

"It is audaciously good," Perceval said; "if one may judge by the general make-up. One might say youth-

## “ATHENA”

fully good,” he added, smiling. “There’s a Quixotic flavor about it which spells the man under thirty. It will probably go the way of all such ventures.”

“Let us enjoy it while it lasts,” Mrs. Maturin said, handing him a cup of tea, then leaning back in her low chair. “My first number must have gone astray, but my conscience is clear. I have sent in my three dollars.”

“What a boy it is!” Perceval said, as his eye lighted on some lines on the editorial page. “If he carries these principles out in his League he’ll turn the student-body into a set of socialists.”

Mrs. Maturin leaned over and drew an American Beauty rose from the jar of faience ware near her.

“It is probably the immediate effect of his newspaper work in New York. He has often told me that, as a reporter in the slums, he saw hell without Virgil for a guide.”

“It is neither poverty nor riches we resent, but the contrast,” Perceval said. “And New York is small enough in area to keep the contrast always before one.”

“I frankly confess that I should make a very poor socialist,” Mrs. Maturin said, looking about the great room, with its subdued twilight of luxury. “I am too fond of rare things, of beautiful things, of exclusive things, and they are costly. Even—even love cannot reach its perfect expression—without the aid of wealth.”

A delicate flush stole over Perceval’s face. He did not look at his hostess, as he asked:

“You mean between the betrothed?”

“Oh, no. In that stage they live in the imagination—imagination supplies everything—I mean married love.

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Of course, wealth cannot preserve romance after marriage, but it can go far toward it."

"I see what you mean. It builds up beautiful barriers, preserves mystery, dignity—all those things that conceal the harsh facts of life."

"Yes; and that is why Mr. Waring will have trouble in converting me—if indeed he believes in it himself. I don't think he does. He has the beauty-loving temperament."

"So has the little girl who married Dr. Penfold. I could see it by her delight in your house the night I met her here."

"Yes; but sub-consciously I imagine; it would be better for her if it remained sub-conscious."

They were both thinking of Dr. Penfold's plain little house, where, if anywhere, married lovers would have no assistance from luxury. Perceval was surprised at Mrs. Maturin's attitude, but pleased with her frankness. The austerity of her grief had aroused in him the impression that the evidences of wealth with which she was surrounded meant little to her. Now he saw his mistake. Beneath the gravity of her almost ascetic atmosphere was a passionate clinging to that beauty which had been one of the chief symbols of a well-nigh perfect union, and, no doubt, had aided in preserving its perfection. During these last months Perceval had often found himself wishing she were penniless; that one less barrier might be between them. This barrier now seemed the very embodiment of the complete hopelessness of his love. Here was a woman frankly sensuous—but who made of her very sensuousness an armor by its complete identification with one supreme love. Perceval knew the fu-

## “ATHENA”

tility of approach against the strongest of all leagues—perfect agreement between flesh and spirit. He could not even pray that this woman, now widowed two years, should forget, for he knew that part of her charm for him was her preoccupation with the dead.

“Have you heard that another Oxford lion is to visit the President?”

“No; who is he?”

“Beauchamp.”

“Ah, the historian of the Oxford Movement.”

“I hope he will not treat us as if we were barbarians, as Freehold did.”

“I remember your sufferings.”

Mrs. Maturin laughed.

“We never had a more difficult guest. At the largest dinner we gave for him he appeared in a gray sack-coat. I was almost in tears, but Herbert only laughed, and said that Freehold had probably left his evening-coat in England, thinking he should have no use for it in the States. Freehold took Miss Ravenel in, I remember, and said abominable things to her about this country; but after dinner he told me she was the most charming woman he had met on this side.”

“Said that—to you!”

“I didn’t care. I was glad he had found something to like here. The strangest part of all was that when Herbert and I were in Oxford the following summer he entertained us, and a more delightful host you could not imagine.”

“Beauchamp will be a different guest, I’m thinking, if one can judge from his books.”

At that moment the Emperor was announced. She



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entered with her peculiar, gliding movement, and that air of perfect unconcern which had been eminently successful in breaking down the barriers between herself and the Faculty Wife. Her own sympathies were, indeed, more deeply involved with the maturer society than with the student-body. The girl's peculiar personality had interested Mrs. Maturin from her freshman year, and a comfortable friendship existed between them.

"I am glad to find you here," the Emperor said, giving her hand to Perceval. "I'm in difficulties—and perhaps you can throw light."

Mrs. Maturin smiled.

"Are the young things——"

"The young things are giving a flagrant exhibition of their youth. I resigned from my fraternity yesterday, because it voted to ostracize Madge Henry."

"And what has she done?"

"Nothing except exercise the right of every free-born American citizen. You see," said the Emperor, knitting her black brows, "she likes Hartley McVeagh——"

"Post-graduate?" Perceval interrupted.

"Yes; electrical engineer. Now, I don't defend him. He's the leader of a wild set. Every one knows that, that knows anything; but Madge likes him—if he is a villain! You know those things don't go by favor of the Ten Commandments——"

Perceval nodded.

"——and he likes Madge. And if she wants to dance with him and go to concerts with him I think it's her own affair, and not the affair of her fraternity——"

"And they have made it their affair?" Mrs. Maturin asked.

## “ATHENA”

“They have, indeed. You know ten of the girls live in the fraternity house. Madge is one of them. Last year they were very much opposed to her going with McVeagh; but I always succeeded in keeping them from showing their disapproval officially. This year they came together, and agreed to give Madge three days in which to choose between her fraternity and McVeagh. Any one who knows her knows the result. She is now without a roof. We have been hunting a place the entire afternoon.”

“Is she engaged to him?” Perceval said.

“That I do not know. But Madge is impulsive—warm-hearted—of course wilful. She graduates this year—and—and I want her to get through all right—and that is why I am worried about her. She might be driven to recklessness by such an unwise measure as this fraternity ostracism. It wasn’t the way to manage her—but they’ll never learn.”

She spoke with an earnestness of manner which surprised one of her hearers. Perceval had always thought her rather flippant. His deep-rooted dislike to co-education seemed to him to find its reason of being embodied in this girl.

Mrs. Maturin remained silent, as if revolving a question.

“Is there no room in Stafford Hall?” she asked at last.

“It is full to the roof. Elizabeth King is with me this year, or Madge could share my room.”

“And the Annex?”

“Not an inch.”

“Bring her to me then, if she will consent to come.”

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She spoke as if the words cost her an effort. The Emperor turned quickly to her.

"Do you really mean it?"

"There are whole suites of rooms empty upstairs."

"Oh, that is good of you!"

"If it will steer the girl away from possible dangers, I am only too glad."

A shadow crossed the Emperor's face.

"But McVeagh? He may want to come—here."

"He can come."

"And you?"

"I will take all the responsibility. It will be well for her to see him against a new background."

"Then may I——?"

"She can send her things at once—to-night. I shall have everything ready for her."

Perceval rose to take his leave. Outside the twilight, a process of nature which he peculiarly loved, was softening the outlines of the western hills. Above the deep red glow a slender moon hung. The lake was glassy. In the darkness of the valley lights twinkled.

Back of the library a stone bench had been erected. He sat there for a few moments, thinking of the young life which filled the broad campus with strong, palpitant forces—the desire to love, the desire to know. Since the dim beginnings of the world these two chief factors of civilization had been at work transforming society; the old Greek love between man and man, beautiful, heroic, impossible; the love of the Middle Ages, chivalrous, unreal, mystic, at once spiritual and earthy, like the dim Gothic cathedrals; modern love, intricate, complex, and

## “ATHENA”

rarely heroic. Perceval's thoughts becoming suddenly personal, he turned from somber memories to that other procession, not the lovers, but the scholars of the world—the patient clerk of the Middle Age, the monk, scorched by the fire of a new conception of the universe, and unbosoming his secret only to be burned in material fires by the Church. Now—these children putting into a careless epigram, or reciting glibly in the class-room, the truths for which Bruno had died. The luxury of heresy had become no longer possible. Heroic love, heroic knowledge, even heroic goodness, seemed denied to modern men and women!

Perceval sighed, gazing through the darkness which had crept up at last from the valley and enveloped him. He would go into the library, he thought, and see the young heads bending over the long tables, the strain of the day over; the strain of another day not yet begun—and a certain atmosphere prevailing of light and warmth, and, as yet, leisurely work.

He walked up one aisle and down another, pausing sometimes in response to a smile and the whispered sound of his name. A boy would speak to him, or a girl glad to be found deep in Greek. He remembered a book he wanted to consult in the German seminary-room, and he made his way there through the winding passages of a lower floor, with their heavy atmosphere of bindings.

Two young men rose as he slipped his key in the door and greeted him heartily. They were both post-graduates, and belonged to a class of students not of the machine-made order of the public schools.

“Don't let me interrupt you.”



## THE LAW OF LIFE

"We were not studying—only wasting our time in discussion."

"And may I ask of what?"

"A great piece of foolishness. Channing contends—what did start such a sophomoric business, Channing? Never mind—he contends that a philosophy of life is necessary at the start. I contend that it is only necessary to have one at the end, to squeeze wisdom from one's experiences; instead of hampering oneself at first with a pack of theories."

"You are both right!"

"Ah, that is equivalent to saying we are both wrong. Do tell us what you think."

Perceval shook his head.

"Don't ask me now," he said, smiling. "It isn't safe. I have the black mood on me, as the Germans say, and might give you reckless advice."

He pulled down a book and was soon deep in it. They exchanged amused glances. This priest concealed beneath his cassock the wounds of life. Of that they were sure. They had once or twice wrangled over his sermons, and, because they did not wholly understand them, they went again to hear him preach.

The Emperor, hurrying to her room, wondered in what words she should couch Mrs. Maturin's invitation to Madge Henry. She found the girl sitting by the window with a droop of her shoulders which suggested reaction from her bravado of the morning. As the Emperor entered she looked up wearily.

"I have good news for you," and then she told her what had happened.



## “ATHENA”

“Of course, Mrs. Maturin doesn’t think you a saint, Madge; she is much too wise for that; but neither does she think you a sinner. You are to go to her—and no one can say a word against your being Hartley McVeagh’s friend if she is back of you; of course, you are the best judge of the worth of his friendship.”

She spoke coldly at the last, suddenly tired of the whole affair, now that she had ended it to her satisfaction.

Madge hesitated a moment, then she rose and came to the Emperor’s side and took her hands.

“I do not know why I care,” she said, piteously. “He isn’t worth it.”

“Of course he isn’t. But if you have to get over it in the light of that valuable discovery, I know of no more soothing environment than Mrs. Maturin’s. She’ll see you through.”

Madge kissed the Emperor, but she turned her cheek sharply away. She did not like people to kiss her unless she loved them very much, and she only cared enough for this little fluttering blonde to want to keep her out of trouble.

## CHAPTER XV.

### A PROSPECTIVE DINNER.

LIONS from the effete European world had become such frequent visitors at Hallworth that the University no longer assumed toward them the grateful and deprecating spirit, as if the obligation were all on one side; but pushed a bottle of its best port across the table, as from man to man, and gave the stranger tempered welcome. It had even arrived at the stage when it had its preference in lions, and frankly asked for those of English origin, because they were so amusing. After recovering from the shock imparted by Freehold's scorn of everything American, Hallworth's sense of humor came to its rescue. The British lion might stalk through the campus in sullen disapproval; but to the University remained the privilege of twisting its inviting tail. There was a general sense of disappointment in the Faculty circle, therefore, when it was learned that Winthrop Beauchamp, the impartial historian of the Oxford Movement, had brought his manners with him; was, moreover, so charming that from his beautiful English accent to his faultless dress he was beyond even cousinly criticism. The excitement of Anglican rudeness, and the complacency of noble self-restraint in the face of it, were thus both denied Hallworth, an institution not exempt from the ennui of culture.

Professor Sordello, who had been at Brasenose with Beauchamp in the days of their youth, commanded his wife to give a large dinner-party for the distinguished

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visitor. Mrs. Sordello acquiesced without a murmur. Her dinner-parties were generally successful, because, being perfectly aware of the limitations of a scholar's salary, she did the best she could up to the last moment, and then committed herself to heaven, in entire sweetness and passivity of spirit, which acted as a delicate leaven to the courses. Having lived in London for a year or two, and forming there an intimate and daily acquaintance with Brussels sprouts, marrow, boiled potatoes and mutton, she had less fear than usual that her dinner might not appeal to the great man's taste. The meats should be perfectly cooked, the wines the right temperature, and fruits and vegetables peculiar to America should be in evidence. Her menu arranged, she sat down with Allaire to draw up the list of guests, dividing it into those who must be invited, those who ought to be, and those we'd like to have. Allaire, who had a keen sense for social distinctions even in democratic Hallworth, was rapidly enumerating the "must-bes," beginning with the President and a trustee, and ending with a name almost new to her mother.

"But why Marston?"

Allaire turned her head wearily to one side.

"Don't you know, mother dear, that he's just written a book on the Homeric Origins—and Dutton told me it was terribly clever?"

"Well, but Hendricks has just had a book published, hasn't he? and you say 'No' to him."

"Yes; but his is on English Church History in the Nineteenth Century."

"Well! Isn't it a good book?"

"Quite proper for you to read, Mummie; but the

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point is that Waring told me Hendricks takes the diametrically opposite view to Beauchamp. It's a question of sources or letters that one of them—I don't know which—had access to, and the other hadn't—when he was writing it, you know. So, you see, you couldn't have them together. They might remember that they were Englishmen and Americans first, and guests afterward, and sadden the dinner."

Mrs. Sordello laughed.

"You're a wise baby. Well, who else? Let me see. Dare we risk Dr. Penfold?"

"Oh, yes, risk him. If he did anything queer Dr. Beauchamp would think it was because he is such a famous man—besides, I want Barbara."

"But I am afraid Mrs. Penfold——" Mrs. Sordello hesitated, for Allaire's clear eyes were fixed upon her.

"You are afraid she would not shine."

"Well, she is rather quiet and shy, my dear—and doesn't talk much."

"There'll be women to take her share of the talking," Allaire said. "And please, little mother, don't forget that Barbara is very young. Wait till she wakes up."

"Very young! She is only a year younger than you, child."

"Yes; but she did not spend her life in Hallworth!"

"Well, let us have them, then. You mustn't think that I do not like Mrs. Penfold, dear. Only she seems to me more domestic than social."

"I know her better. If she hadn't made this absurd marriage——"

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"Well, as long as she has made it she'd better remain domestic."

Allaire shook her head.

"But whom will we put her with?"

"Dutton on one side."

"Allaire," her mother said, a note of vexation in her voice, "I can't have Dutton every time. He really doesn't belong at this dinner."

"Why not?" Allaire said, a light coming into her eyes that her mother knew was a signal of revolt.

"He's not clever enough."

"You mean he can't talk in epigrams. Well, I'm glad he can't. I'm sick of them!"

"But why should he be asked to meet Dr. Beauchamp? He has done nothing."

"Because he's an honest American citizen and I like him," Allaire said hotly. "He has character enough to ballast another Oxford Movement should one come up."

"Don't get too fond of him." Her mother had visions of a college president for Allaire.

"I'm only afraid I won't."

Her mother sighed, then laughed.

"Now, dear, see if this arrangement is good."

Allaire looked at it critically.

"It's all right except that Dr. Melton and Professor Smith will be directly opposite each other, and they've scarcely spoken since Prexy's last dinner—or so I hear."

"What are they quarreling about?"

"Well, you know," Allaire said judiciously, "they do not agree, because one's an Hegelian, and the other—well, the other is too—and each thinks he's the sole possessor of the secret—whatever it is. At Dr. Hunt's



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dinner Dr. Melton said only a sophomore would interpret Hegel in a certain way; and Professor Smith glared and said he'd be sixty-five next June——”

“Oh, Allaire, Allaire!” her mother said, laughing; “that is too much.”

“I assure you I had it direct,” she said solemnly; but her eyes danced. “Mrs. Joyce was at the dinner, and she told Mrs. Cartwright, and Mrs. Cartwright told Dutton, and Dutton told Waring, and Waring told me.”

“Enough of your nonsense! Now tell me, like a good child, which you'd rather have—a new silk waist or American Beauty roses on your poor mother's dinner-table?”

Barbara received her invitation one morning at breakfast. She was waiting for her husband to finish the inspection of his mail that she might ask him whether they should accept or not.

Nothing broke the silence of the room but Dr. Penfold's loud crunching of his toast, as he bent his spectacles over a paper. Barbara had already learned not to attempt to penetrate this absorption which, with the setting in, in earnest, of the year's work, had begun to surround her husband like a thick aura. The emotions of the past weeks had swept over him, had subsided under the pressure of outside interests and demands, leaving him much as he had been before, gentle and affectionate indeed, but preoccupied, and accepting the new element in his household as a comfortable matter of course. But Barbara was still vibrating to the new chord which had been struck in her life. Bewilderment, not without its admixture of pain, was in full possession of

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her, and there were hours when she confused her nerves with her emotions. Concerning these inner cataclysms her lips were sealed, her present conception of a husband being a person whom you must not disturb with your questionings. Moreover it seemed that there were some questions which you could only ask God!

Dr. Penfold looked up at last, and seeing her gaze fixed upon him, said kindly:

“What is it, dear?”

“A dinner invitation for the tenth of November—from Professor and Mrs. Sordello—to meet Dr. Beauchamp, it says.”

“Would you like to go, my dear?”

“Would you?” she said, knitting her straight black brows.

“They give me indigestion for a week, those long course dinners; but Beauchamp is worth it, and you should find it entertaining. Write and accept for us if you care to go.”

“I have never been to a large dinner—and I want—I want you to enjoy it.”

“Oh, I’ll enjoy it when the time comes; but you must make my decisions for me, little girl. Is that the half-past eight bell? If I’m not home promptly for lunch, don’t wait, Barbara.”

He went into the hall and put on his great-coat, then came back to where she stood looking out on the campus, and kissed her.

“What are you going to do to-day?”

“Lots of things,” Barbara answered brightly, forcing herself to smile up in his face. “Plan you a beautiful dinner for one——”

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“Don’t attempt any pastry—what-you-call-’ems—I’m so easily upset. Better leave that side of it to Mehitabel, dear. She knows just what I want. She ought to, she’s been with me long enough. But order anything you like for yourself.”

“I wasn’t thinking of myself. I want to please you.”

He smiled.

“You do please me—always. You need not think of dinners to do that.”

Barbara watched him from the window as he went lightly down the garden-walk, then she looked at the line of students filing up the avenue, all walking as if under pressure of immediate duties and engagements. She turned away at last, feeling a vague sense of loneliness in the quiet house. She wondered what she should do next. During the first month of bridehood Mehitabel, who liked Barbara, though she joined forces with her superiors in disapproving of the marriage, had come to her for orders; but finding that Mrs. Penfold was more inclined to consult than command, and finding also that she knew very little of Dr. Penfold’s tastes, the old servant took back the show of authority which she had never really surrendered, and quietly went on as before with the full care of the house. Barbara did not remonstrate. She had as yet no grasp on her matronly privileges.

Mehitabel coming in to clear the breakfast-table, Barbara went to dust the little drawing-room, and to change the water in the vases of flowers. Some were from the garden, some purchased at the greenhouse, where she had the traitorous thought one day of being glad that

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she possessed money of her own. She had put it out of her mind immediately, feeling that in some vague way she had been untrue to her husband in thinking it.

When she had finished her dusting of the prim little room, and changed the vases about with that anxiety for trifles which is born of too much leisure, she went upstairs. Her husband's study door stood open, but she did not enter. One bleak hour was still vividly in her mind, when they had searched together for a missing paper, presumably displaced by the zeal of her morning's dusting. She was exonerated afterward, the paper being found in a drawer; but the tragic look on her husband's face was an appeal for future self-restraint in domestic fervor. She determined that she should be always ready to prove an alibi in the matter of the table with its confused heaps of papers, letters, books, manuscript. He had praised her order before their marriage; but she had to learn that by a curious spiritual chemistry the virtues of the girl may become the faults of the wife.

She went into her own room, flooded with morning sunlight, and her spirits rose. She sat down before her books and read the titles over, as if saying good-morning to old friends. The Swinburne was conspicuous by its absence. Since the night when her husband had read her the story of "Yseulte of the White Hand," she had hated the book and wanted it out of her sight. She had wrapped it up at last and mailed it to her old nurse at Kingsbrook, asking her to put it back in the home-  
stead library.

After a while she began to think of the dinner and to wonder what she should wear. The education of that



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one evening at Mrs. Maturin's was still operating in her, and remembering Mrs. Joyce's dress of scarlet chiffon, she reasoned that if such a gown were worn at the most informal gathering, a dinner called for something much more elaborate.

"I shall ask the Emperor. I shall go to the Hall directly after lunch. And then I'll coax Amos for a walk," she thought, glad to be filling up a day which had opened with a prospect of dragging. She found it difficult since the term opened to get her husband out for their old walks; but her will proved stronger than his on several occasions, and he was pleased at the last to yield.

She sat sewing for a while, but finding that this occupation—never too congenial—allowed her thoughts to wander through labyrinthine ways, she turned to her books instead. At the end of a long morning she ate her lunch alone, and afterward hastened to Stafford Hall, glad to escape from the quiet house. As she went through the corridors to the Emperor's room, and heard snatches of girlish talk and saw familiar faces, she wondered why she had felt so out of place among them last year; and deep regret stirred within her for an experience forever withdrawn.

She hoped that she would find the Emperor alone. In some moods Elizabeth's cheerfulness hurt one, as too sudden light the eyes.

The Emperor was alone, seated in her low arm-chair, with a book on her knees. Her long-suffering "Come in" changed to a cry of welcome as she saw Barbara.

"You are working. I will not keep you long."



## A PROSPECTIVE DINNER

"But I want you. I have been missing you 'way down deep. Sit here; no, sit there, where I can have a good look at Mrs. Amos Penfold."

A delicate flush overspread Barbara's face.

"No; 'Barbara,' please, to-day. Do you remember what you said once to me?"

"I talked much nonsense to you last year under the impression that you were a freshman."

"You said it was imperative I should like you. Now I say to you that it is imperative that you like me."

"I was afraid you'd find out last year how much I did like you. It kept me always on guard."

"Don't be on guard now," Barbara said. There was an appealing look in her face, which made the Emperor want to rise from her chair and go to her; but she remained impersonal, not being of the temperament to forego the luxury of rejection.

"I'm not on guard now," she said softly. "I am yours to command."

Barbara smiled.

"You have always been good to me. This time it is a dinner-gown. Dr. Penfold and I are invited to dine at Professor Sordello's to meet Dr. Beauchamp, and I'm perfectly sure that I have nothing in my wardrobe to meet the occasion. Somehow last summer I couldn't get quite the things I wanted. I had no one to advise with, and I was afraid to venture."

"Barbara," the Emperor said slowly, "the hour for which I have long prayed has arrived. Will you let me do the planning of that dinner-dress, and help you get into it on the night of the party?"

"Will I let you? Indeed, yes! Only——"

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“Only what?”

“It will be suitable—for me?”

“Child, when you get into that dress you’ll know what you’re put into the world for. There are gowns which are revealers of destiny. This will be one!”

Barbara laughed, then sighed.

“I should be glad to know why I am here.”

The Emperor heard the sigh and recorded it, but she was not surprised. Had this bride of seven weeks been found happy she would have erased her tenets of wisdom, and closed her book of experience in despair.

The planning of the dress occupied an hour or more, and Barbara hastened home afterward with the sense of having neglected some duty. She found her husband at work.

“I did not mean to be out when you came back,” she said earnestly, as she entered the study.

He looked up bewildered.

“You have not been in the house, dear?”

“No; I left a little note for you with Mehitabel. Didn’t she give it to you?”

“She did, and I forgot to read it. I am more than usually rushed to-day, Barbara—and Schelling is begging for another work to supplement that of last year.”

“Will you begin another book so soon?”

“I think I shall, as soon as my classes are running smoothly.”

“I have been to see Miss Dare. She is planning me a gown for the Sordellos’ dinner.”

“That is good. Where are you going now?”

“You couldn’t go for a walk?”

## A PROSPECTIVE DINNER

"I'm afraid not."

"I think I shall, then."

"Very well—I shall see you at dinner, and will you kindly tell Mehitabel that I am not at home to any one?"

Barbara chose a path through the woods which she knew would be unfrequented at that hour. Nature was always soothing to her, and on this still eve of All Saints the very rustle of the dead leaves beneath her feet seemed to speak of peace obtainable only under the wide and open sky. Of late longing for human comfort and comprehension had alternated in her with desire for solitude. On some days she felt that she was not fit to face the pure light of heaven, on others that only heaven could understand. Realizations lurked like wolves in the background of her consciousness, and threatened at times to destroy her very identity. Where was the Barbara, the child who read her Virgil in the old house at Kingsbrook, and tended her roses in the garden, and talked with an old scholar concerning the mysteries of the universe? The greatest mystery of all had never been spoken of. Why had her uncle never mentioned marriage, or love? The wound of his life was hearsay to her, her old nurse having told her the story of the woman who played him false. A certain gentle reproach filled her heart now. He should not have sent her into the world with her eyes bandaged. On this afternoon, walking alone through the autumn woods, she felt like one who treads over a gulf. If she opened her eyes she would fall. Safety consisted in deliberate blindness now. She did not reason this out plainly, but gropingly. Instinct had been strong in her these last weeks, and it was

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teaching her to yield to the current of events on which she had deliberately embarked.

She tried to think only of the sweet, silent woods about her, and the delicious glimpses of blue between the trees. After a while she grew tired and sat down to rest at the foot of a pine-tree. Twilight came with a stride, and found her there.

Waring, returning from a walk, recognized her in the distance by the attitude in which he had first seen her, her elbows on her knees and her chin propped on the palms of her hands. As he drew near she rose nervously, half-frightened; then, recognizing him, she held out both her hands with a happy cry.

"I am glad it is you! I had stopped too long, and when I heard the steps I was afraid."

"It's an eerie time to be in the woods, but it's all right now, and I have an unexpected pleasure."

He spoke cheerily, glad to see the color come back to her face; but the eyes, turned frankly to him from time to time on their homeward walk, seemed large and sad. He wondered of what she had been thinking alone there in the woods—and why she was alone.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### A GLIMPSE INTO A KINGDOM.

WARING and Dr. Penfold were seated in the latter's study talking earnestly of a matter concerning the mathematical classes. Waring had dressed early for the Sor-dellos' dinner that he might have time to dispose of this business before the hour for pleasure. As he talked he was conscious of a girlish voice in the adjoining room, symbolized to his mind by the faint perfume of violets pervading the house.

There was a rustle of skirts at last, and Barbara entered shyly, followed by the Emperor. Waring rose, not trying in the least to keep his surprise and delight from his face. He could scarcely believe that it was Barbara.

The dress, planned to be a revealer of destiny, was of white chiffon, full and abundant, covered all over with shining little silver sequins. The waist, low-cut, revealed Barbara's white arms and neck. Her hair, dressed in Madonna fashion, held white velvet roses, upon whose petals sequins sparkled like dew. Not a touch of color anywhere. The Emperor looked triumphant.

Barbara was blushing, but an aura of self-possession surrounded her, glorified her. She was on the verge of reigning, of understanding, of stepping into her own—needed now but the response to her overture to life.

Compliments came running to Waring's lips, and begged to be let out; but he held them in check, for she



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was not looking at him, but at her husband, her eyes asking as plainly as if she spoke for admiration, approval.

Dr. Penfold rose and gazed at his wife through a mist of abstraction.

“Ah, my dear, you are ready! Must we go?”

He looked at his watch; then reached for his great-coat, flung over a near-by chair. The light went out of Barbara’s face. She turned with a certain embarrassment of manner to the Emperor, who had been watching the scene with a keenness of comprehension not visible in the pale mask of her features.

“Do you remember, dear; what I did with my fan?”

Something rose up in Waring and choked him. He would give a kingdom to bring that look back to Barbara’s eyes! As he helped Dr. Penfold into his great-coat he said in a low voice: “Mrs. Penfold looks charming. Have I your permission to tell her so?”

Then Dr. Penfold turned to Barbara. Her head was bent over a glove she was buttoning. When she looked up again Waring saw that her eyes were full of tears.

Barbara found herself at dinner between Dutton and Waring. Although she did not know it her entrance into the drawing-room had created a sensation. The Emperor in planning her effects had shown a subtle understanding of personality. The white gown, with its silver sequins, was at once an expression of its wearer’s actual and potential character. The question remained which aspect of the dress would Barbara respond to? In Dr. Penfold’s study it seemed for an instant as if

## A GLIMPSE INTO A KINGDOM

she were realizing her future possibilities. Then the pink rose folded in its petals and became again a white bud.

It was in the character of a white bud that she sat through the dinner. Allaire had not shown her usual astuteness in placing Barbara between the two men she knew well. Neither challenged her to talk, so she listened for the most part to such snatches of conversation as reached her. Directly opposite to her Perdita Ravenel, beautiful in a gown of black velvet, was holding the attention of those near her by her witty yet unobtrusive talk. Dr. Beauchamp, at the right of his hostess, was conversing pleasantly, and missing nothing while he conversed, his keen blue eyes seeking the souls of the other guests, under their society manner. He seemed too impersonal to be brilliant. Dr. Hunt was at Mrs. Sordello's left, enjoying the delicate flavor of his Burgundy, and saying little with zest.

"If I lived in Oxford," Mrs. Sordello said to fill up a pause in the conversation, "I should never leave it. Such a paradise of ivy and Gothic as it is!"

"Its very perfection drives us away," Dr. Beauchamp said, a faint smile lighting up his fine, clear-cut features. "We are afraid of becoming crystallized—of living too much in the past."

"We have our troubles here," said Mrs. Joyce; "but becoming crystallized is not one of them. Did you ride on a New York cable-car, Dr. Beauchamp?"

He laughed.

"Yes. I had that experience several times."

"It does not promote a belief in sweetness and light, does it!"

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"No; but it does make one believe in American good-humor—and nonchalance under difficulties."

"The more timid among us remain in the rural districts," Dr. Hunt said, with a grim smile.

"After all, the country is the true place in which to cultivate the little plant happiness," Dr. Beauchamp said.

Mrs. Joyce pouted.

"It doesn't make me happy. I'm like the Brooklyn man who said his idea of heaven was to be always going to New York."

"That man had imagination," said Mrs. Sordello; "it was the going, not the arriving. He knew the reality was never up to the expectation."

"What a tremendous range men's ideas of happiness cover," said Dr. Beauchamp. "I suppose our conception of what constitutes happiness is a fair measure of our civilization."

"Let us canvass the table," Mrs. Sordello said. "Dr. Hunt, what is your conception of happiness?"

"The present moment."

"If you take refuge in compliments we shall have no interesting revelations of character. The truth, please."

"I gave you a truthful answer, but if you wish another—my conception of happiness is a friendly dog at my feet and an uncut edition de luxe in my hands."

"Beautiful! Dr. Penfold, what is yours?"

"Mine, Mrs. Sordello—a good cigar, and an unknown quantity, the more elusive the better."

Barbara smiled across at her husband. She seemed

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as pleased by his little speech as if it had been a gallant token to her bridehood.

"And yours, Miss Ravenel?"

"Now, Perdita, speak the truth," Mrs. Joyce said "Don't hide behind your wit."

"I shall hide behind Maeterlinck and say the enchantment of the disenchanted."

A laugh went up.

"Now, Mr. Waring, yours!"

"To have a joy withdrawn while you're at the height of it."

"Ah, you people of a younger generation!" Professor Sordello said; "how you revel in subtleties. No one has asked me yet my conception of happiness."

"Tell us," Perdita said.

"To be able to endow a theatre for the revival of Elizabethan drama."

"Will you give me a life-chair in the orchestra?" said Perdita.

Dr. Beauchamp leaned a little toward his hostess.

"Will you not ask the lovely young woman in white her conception of happiness?"

"Ah, that is the bride, Mrs. Penfold."

"Is she a bride? Her expression is sad."

"Mrs. Penfold, will you not tell us yours?"

Mrs. Sordello spoke sweetly, a look of encouragement in her eyes. Barbara's beautiful dress had pleaded for her this evening.

She blushed now, feeling the eyes of the company fixed upon her. But, as once before, when called upon in class to read Virgil, her pride came to her rescue, mingled with another feeling, the desire to do credit to

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her husband. She was silent for a moment, as if thinking, then she said:

“Isn’t it—when one has done the best one can—to know how to fail gracefully?”

There was a half-suppressed murmur about the table. Waring remembered Barbara’s way of surprising people. Dr. Beauchamp leaned forward.

“Mrs. Penfold,” he said in his low voice, vibrant with an exquisite courtesy, “we award you the prize. Some of us desired the improbable—but at least one can, as you say, fail gracefully.”

Barbara was mute. She had brought all her resources to meet the moment, and had nothing more to say. The art of small-talk was as yet unknown to her. Waring wished that she would seize her opportunity, knowing full well that a few light words, a few little coquetries of manner, would launch her upon the current of Hallworth’s social life. But he saw that her shyness clamped her again.

“And she’ll get no help from Penfold,” he thought; then he turned to her and asked her if she would not come to the next meeting of the League.

All through the dinner Barbara had been conscious of an undercurrent of unhappy feeling. From the moment when entering radiant her husband’s study, she had sought his eyes for response to her own joy in her new gown, and found not even recognition, she had teased her heart with questions. Why did he not say something? Why was he not aware of the pretty dress? She had thought his absent-mindedness as a bachelor the result partly of his loneliness. As a



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wife she expected to dispel it. The conviction forced itself upon her that she was not making the proper impression on her husband. "Perhaps he doesn't need me enough," she thought, and she resolved to ask him that evening about his new book and bespeak her help with it.

Dr. Penfold, always glad to get back to his own environment, had put on his slippers and a smoking-jacket, and was enjoying the cigar that was to put him in tune with his work. Barbara, still in her evening-dress, came and stood at the opposite side of the fireplace.

"Do you like my gown?" she said.

"It is very pretty."

"But you didn't tell me so to-night."

"Don't expect too much of me, Barbara dear. I never learned to say the usual things."

"Ah, but did you think them?" she said gravely.

He smiled.

"You are determined to corner me. My head was full of business, dear, and I frankly confess that I didn't see the pretty gown until Waring spoke of it."

She looked wistful. "I don't care so much about your saying things—if you'll only think them."

He laughed. "I'll try. You must train me, Barbara. Come here, little girl."

She went over to him obediently. He took both her hands in his.

"Whether I see or whether I don't—whether I speak or whether I don't, always remember that I love you well, that I need you!"

A soft glow overspread her face, as if some lamp of truth had been lit within her.

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“You need me! You’ll let me help you with the book, won’t you?”

He laughed.

“Do you want me to break my arm again?”

“Oh, no. But won’t there be something for me to do?”

“I am afraid not, Barbara; and to be truthful I do work better alone. I don’t want to shut you out, but——”

“But what can I do, then, to be of some use here?” she cried, with a note in her voice new to him, of protest, of questioning. “Mehitabel takes care of you. You trust her where you don’t trust me—I can’t help you in your work. What can I do?”

“I hope the future will tell you that,” her husband said softly, and then a realization swept over him that standing there by his side she looked very young and fair. He put his cigar aside and drew her down to him.

“Let me look more closely at this wonderful dress.”

But Barbara drew back, suddenly rigid with a taunting thought.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### INTUITIONS.

WARING, in an official atmosphere of litter, was making up the May number of *College and State*. A cold March rain beat against the windows overlooking the main street of Sparta. The office was bare and dreary, chiefly because the editor had concentrated all the comfort and attractiveness at his command in the adjoining meeting and reading rooms of the League. It was part of his plan that these should be open not only to members, but to the students in general. Waring's own career at college had been rose-padded, but he was keenly aware of that proportion of the student-body, never small at Hallworth, who, because of poverty, or lack of magnetism, or overseriousness, went through their four years with little or no social life, living for the most part in environments devoid of beauty. Waring, remembering one or two interiors of these second-class houses, resolved to make his rooms as luxurious as possible, and to let it be known that they were open to the student-public. The Emperor and Allaire, divining his purpose, had enlisted the sympathy of Mrs. Maturin, of whom a wit had lately said that losing her husband she had espoused the University. Her devotion to Hallworth was puzzling even to Waring; but Perceval, with the insight of a lover, knew that her two years of happy union with its former President had swathed the whole institution in romance.

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Her interest in the League took the form of a munificent gift of beautiful furniture for the rooms, which had carpets and hangings of dull blue. Some pictures from her gallery were loaned, a Stuart portrait of Washington holding the place of honor. The reading-room she supplied with current reviews, the book-shelves with the current works on political topics, besides keeping the vases and bowls full of flowers from her hot-houses. The Emperor's contribution was an elaborately fitted-out tea-table, to which her fraternity, who had refused to be given up, made offerings of cups and saucers. Once a week the editorial staff was at home to the University, and Waring, having succeeded in making the League fashionable, left it to run itself for the most part, and gave his time to the magazine. The allegorical figure of Truth on the first number had been replaced by a sober, plain green cover, bearing the list of contents. This list was an abiding joy to Waring. It sounded so well.

A portion of *College and State* was devoted especially to the interests of Hallworth, and students were paid to contribute articles on the idea of a university as they conceived it. Abuses were also attacked, and Waring, although a fraternity man, was now writing a series of papers on the history of the fraternity system, and its significance to college life, in which the bias was clearly against it. The introductory article brought him a note of congratulation from the President, whose well-known attitude had caused him to be accused of a desire to anglicize Hallworth. Waring smiled over the note, and was glad that ambition and honesty had so far gone hand in hand. He sometimes marveled at Dutton's ap-

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parent content in year after year grinding the mill of an assistant professorship, with no attempt to rise or to peep over the fence about Hallworth into the great world. It was Waring's theory that unless a university man constantly remembered the great world, the great world would forget him.

He still had his mail to examine before he could go into the next rooms, where sounds told him that the function of afternoon tea had already begun. Looking over the envelopes he selected one whose superscription aroused his curiosity. It was from the trustees of a little Western university of which he had never heard, offering him a full professorship in the chair of political economy. He was reading it when Dutton entered, and he handed it to him without a word.

"I congratulate you, Waring." His face fell. "You'll take it, of course."

"I wouldn't think of such a thing."

"Heaven be praised! We won't lose you, then—but why?"

"I'd rather be second in Rome than first in Kansas."

"But how 'did they hear of you?" Dutton asked naively.

Waring laughed.

"Hear of such an unknown quantity? *College and State*, I suppose. We have a Kansas subscriber, by the way; I wonder if he sent them a copy."

"They evidently think you know something of political economy," Dutton said, looking dazed.

Waring laughed again.

"And you know better—don't you, old chap? I'll say no, thank you, to Kansas. I know its type—a high-



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school equipment, half-starved faculty, and the rawest kind of degrees. I am going to run some articles soon on 'Bastard Colleges of the United States, and Their Detriment to Citizenship.' I'd like to found a manual training-school in place of every one of them."

Dutton looked admiringly at his friend. The impossible seemed always about to happen when Waring was around.

The junior class-yell at that moment beat up against the windows. Glancing out, they saw a number of juniors in close colloquy. The group growing larger and larger, the two men opened the window a moment to find the cause of the disturbance.

"Oh, I know," Dutton said, suddenly shutting the window again. "They want Williams back. They consigned Hunt to hell all last evening, but I doubt if he'll oblige them by going."

"We had Williams's petition for the spring term at the last meeting of the Faculty. But Hunt won't consider it."

"I think he's right.

"I should not like to cross his will," Waring said musingly. "If they want him they've come to the right place. He told me he might drop in this afternoon for a cup of tea."

"Any of the Faculty Wife?"

"I sent a special invitation to Mrs. Penfold."

"How is she? I haven't seen her for a long time."

"Well, I guess," Waring answered carelessly, "they don't go out much. The Doctor's frightfully busy, and she won't venture alone. I know she has refused several invitations this winter."

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“That seems a pity.”

“Yes; if she waits for him she’ll wait forever. He was never a society man—by the wildest stretch of the imagination. By the way, I met Perceval this afternoon, walking like mad through the country, and white as a ghost. He told me he had just come from a child with scarlet fever, and was taking a bath of fresh air; but I thought something else was up, for he looked haggard.”

“I know why we all like him,” Waring said. “It’s because he’s a mystery. I’d like to look into the heart under the cassock.”

“Do you think he’s a good man?”

Waring sighed, then laughed. Dutton’s literalness weighed on him sometimes like shadowless noon.

“I think he’s a saint just because he’s been a sinner at one time—could be one yet; otherwise he’d be a good-for-nothing saint.”

Dutton shivered.

“It’s cold in this den of yours. I think I’ll go in and get a cup of tea.”

“All right, my Jonathan, I’ll join you in a few minutes.”

But he worked on for nearly an hour. When he left his desk, at last, he found the adjoining rooms full of students, with the Emperor presiding at the tea-table, an embodied challenge to masculine admiration. Barbara was seated near her, and Mrs. Maturin and the President were talking by the fire. Waring, seeing that Mrs. Penfold had not noticed his entrance, gave himself a moment to study her. He thought she looked pale and

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etherealized, her face as delicately cut as a Burne-Jones drawing; but poised between potential beauty and potential matronly tarnish. What if she should become thin and commonplace and sallow!—perish the thought! The eagerness to escape it brought him to her side.

“Had I known you were here I should not have lingered so over my work.”

“I’m glad you’ve come,” she said simply. “It is so long since I have seen you.”

“I’ve been so busy.”

She nodded, without a smile.

“I know!—every one is busy here—except myself.”

She spoke with an accent of bitterness. He was touched.

“Mrs. Penfold, may I speak very plainly? Don’t you think you ought to take more advantage of what Hallworth offers you?”

She raised her large gray eyes. He noticed how long the lashes were which shaded them.

“In what way?” she said.

“Go out more. I know some of these affairs are deadly stupid; we all know that; but we all go to hold up our end of the line—and we can’t spare you.”

He spoke earnestly, and, looking up in his face, the thought crossed her mind that its gravity became him. Waring’s nonchalance had always seemed to her his most striking characteristic. Now she found herself wondering if she really knew him.

“You remember I am not a social being,” she said, with a ghost of a smile, “and I had the poorest of preparations for such a life as this. I am too serious—too literal, oh, I do not know what, but I feel my defects.

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I did not feel them at Kingsbrook, for my life was bound up with another life, and in such perfect affection—and companionship you do not realize——”

She stopped short, and Waring in his astonishment was conscious of one clear idea, to save her from realizing that she had betrayed herself.

“You need not fear the mirror of society,” he said quickly; “only take courage and smile at it, and it will answer your smile.”

She looked up at him dreamily.

“You see, as a child I smiled when—I was happy—and that wasn’t discipline.” The color rushed to her face. “You’re not always happy in society,” she added quickly—“however happy you are at home.”

“I think you can be, if you don’t take it too seriously,” Waring went on; “and we are heavy enough at Hallworth; we need your carelessness.”

“What are they shouting about in the streets?” she asked suddenly.

“The juniors want Williams back, and they’ll have him if there is not a throat left in the class.”

“Ah, it isn’t my class, then, that’s misbehaving?”

“Your class! Oh, I remember, this would have been your sophomore year.”

“Some day I’m going to ask them all to come to see me, the class I never knew,” Barbara said impulsively. “If I ever give a reception it shall be to them.”

Waring nodded—and smiled.

“You should atone to them for your scorn of them—in your freshman year.”

“I didn’t scorn them. I did worse. I didn’t know they existed.”



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"Is indifference the unforgivable sin? Yes, I think we prefer hate to indifference."

"You'll have your preference, Mr. Waring," the Emperor interrupted, "if you go Don Quixoting too much in our incomparable magazine. Barbara, take my place a moment. I have a bit of business with the President, and I can't ask him to come to me."

A man approached Barbara for a cup of tea. He had a sleepy, good-natured face and an indifferent, gentlemanly manner.

"Beastly day," he vouchsafed, as Barbara fixed the cup and asked if it was to be cream or lemon.

He carried the offering to a pretty, blonde girl who sat in a window-seat, looking down the street. Her rather commonplace expression vanished as she turned her face to his, and animation enhaloed her rosily. Hartley McVeagh watched her as she talked to him gaily, nervously, like a girl in love. Since she had had Mrs. Maturin's backing her value had increased greatly in his eyes. Mrs. Maturin herself, gracious, stately, impersonal, never in the way, and never out of the way, he did not understand; but the luxury of her house he could understand, and its chaperonage of Madge. Having only seen her against the somewhat thin decoration of a fraternity house, he found her prettiness enhanced by the solidity of wealth. Besides, whether owing to Mrs. Maturin's influence or whether the girl had come under the spell of her new background, she visibly gained in dignity. McVeagh had almost made up his mind to marry her—at his leisure.

This afternoon his hand was unexpectedly forced. In the middle of a sentence he caught sight of a big



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bunch of double violets lying on the seat by Madge's side.

"Whose are those?"

"Mine."

"Did you purchase them, may I ask?"

"They were sent me."

"May I ask by whom?"

Color swept over her face.

"You have no right to ask."

"No; but I want the right. You know what I mean.

I want you to marry me."

"Hartley, I don't know about that."

He grew rigid with astonishment.

"You mean——" His sleepy eyes opened wide.

"I mean I should do nothing rashly—now."

"You know you love me."

He spoke in a low whisper.

"Hush, they will hear."

"You know you do."

"I do," she said, a break in her voice.

"Well?"

"Well, that is no reason why I should marry you."

"You are growing very subtle, Madge. Is it association with Mrs. Maturin?"

"Hush, she has been your very best friend."

"I'm glad to hear it," he said coldly. "But her friendship takes the form of prejudicing you——"

"She has never influenced me one way or the other—never spoken even."

"Then what the——"

"Hartley, be careful."

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The sleepy mask had dropped from his face. Something very like pain was in his eyes.

"This room is suffocating. I am going for a walk. You will excuse me?"

"Yes."

"Good-by."

"Good-by."

Barbara, who had been watching the two idly from across the room, now heard the words of farewell and saw the girl's pallor. She rose and went over to her.

"May I give you another cup of tea?" she whispered.

"No, indeed, thank you, Mrs. Penfold. I think Mrs. Maturin is going soon."

Her voice trembled. Suddenly, impulsively, she reached for the bunch of violets.

"Don't you want these?" she said. "I don't care—for—violets—and they oughtn't to die here."

Barbara took them, understanding by a sudden flash of intuition. Was she always to play the negative role?—to look on and understand?

When she went back to the tea-table, the violets pinned to her little gray silk blouse, the President approached her.

"And how is Mrs. Penfold?" he said kindly.

"Very well, I thank you. May I give you a cup of tea?"

He smiled.

"Yes, I think you may. The necessity of a speech is upon me, and I shall need a stimulus."

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A large number of students had by this time assembled under the windows of the club. They were calling for Dr. Hunt loudly, importunately, yet with the baffled note of failure in their hoarse voices. For nearly six months they had pitted their strength against his, their will against his, in the matter of the restoration of Williams; and had found something of the tenacity of the bulldog Melampus in the character of the head of Hallworth, a quality which compelled their admiration in spite of themselves. Williams's conduct had been flagrant, but his nonchalance and his wealth combined were a kind of protecting aura. The battle for him had become the more serious when the President's obduracy was known.

Dr. Hunt drank his cup of tea and talked to Barbara in his somewhat sardonic fashion, which made its own appeal to her. She was never embarrassed by unconventional people. The great bulldog gazing sleepily into the fire ignored the assemblage within doors. His master for the moment ignored the assemblage outside.

The students in the club-room, the majority of whom were seniors and post-graduates, had been watching the President closely. His grim, commanding figure, towering beside the little tea-table, belittled the vanities of the occasion, and suggested an approaching transition to sterner work. They did not have long to wait. He put down his cup and stepped to a French window opening on a covered balcony. Those inside gathered back of him, Barbara among the rest, curious to watch the little comedy.

A roar from the street greeted his appearance. The junior yell went up, mingled with the name Williams.

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Dr. Hunt gazed quietly down on the throng, an amused smile on his firm, clear-cut lips.

There was a lull.

"Young gentlemen, what can I do for you?"

"Reinstate Williams," said a clear voice from the crowd.

"Young gentlemen, Hallworth is not a reformatory."

A shout of laughter rose for an instant.

"——nor a kindergarten."

"——nor a refuge for that genus which our English cousins call 'cad.' These things it is not. In return I should like to have you tell me what you think it is. I will give a hundred dollars in gold to the junior who sends to *College and State* before the end of the term the best paper on what Hallworth stands for, or should stand for. Young gentlemen, I bid you good-evening."

The crowd in the street melted away, and the President re-entered the club-room. Waring turned to Dutton.

"I should not wish to come into collision with Dr. Hunt," he said.

At that moment Barbara, looking childlike, approached and held out her hand.

"I have been thinking of what you said. I shall try—to do better."

"Oh, please, you took me too seriously. You make me feel that I was impertinent."

"No; I want you to tell me—to set me right."

Waring, looking down at her, was stirred with a new emotion, a desire to put what knowledge of life he possessed at her service.

## INTUITIONS

“It was only that I thought you were unkind to Hallworth to keep yourself in the background.”

She sighed, but made no answer.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE CALL OF THE CHILD.

“BARBARA—oh, I beg pardon, my dear, I did not know you were here—what is the matter?”

Barbara rose from her knees by the bed, her prayers still in her face. She wore a long, white dressing-gown. In the faint light of the night-lamp she looked tall and unreal.

Her husband was vaguely disturbed. He had never before seen her on her knees, nor did he think she was the kind of a woman to express her religious feeling in outward forms. She stood silent, facing him, a look in her eyes half-timid, half-appealing.

“My dear, don’t you feel well?” he asked, a note of anxiety in his voice.

“I am well, I hope—Amos,” she added solemnly. “I was praying for——” she caught her breath with a kind of sob—“for our child.”

He looked at her a moment, and then his face, somewhat stern and abstracted by hours of hard work, melted into tenderness.

“Barbara, dear, have you known this long?”

“About two months,” she said softly.

“I am glad—most of all for your sake. You will not be—so lonely.”

“No.”

“You have been lonely, then?”

“A—a little.”

## THE CALL OF THE CHILD

A flush spread over his face. He came over to her and sat on the edge of the bed, drawing her down by his side.

“Barbara, if you should be unhappy through me I should feel that I had betrayed my trust.”

“You mean—to Uncle Robert?”

“Yes.”

“I think if I knew I was necessary to you I should be quite content.”

He looked troubled.

“I suppose a man’s work always comes first,” he said, as if thinking aloud. “I am selfish, Barbara. I am glad to have you here to turn to—to speak to. Is it a small thing that you have taken away my loneliness?”

“You are glad to have me here?”

“My dear!”

The feeling that she was but a guest in her husband’s house, the feeling that she was not somehow a good woman, had interchanged and interchanged through this first year of marriage, till sometimes she had no grasp whatever on her own personality. But since the first knowledge stealing in on her from the infinite that she was to become a mother, the vague idea that she was not a good woman had quite departed. Here was the reason of that mystery of the universe, that unsuspected sea surrounding the paddock of her girlhood, into whose depths she had suddenly been plunged. Above its dark and hateful waters this star of maternity had risen—to guide her to what haven? In the pain of this wonderful experience she could seek purification, in its joy enlightenment. The child should redeem her from the un-

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known sin, which lurked like a shadow in her days. Now if she could feel at home, feel that she was needed, she might regain the quiet peace of her early life.

She put her head down upon her husband's shoulder.

"Amos, I want to be happy—for the child's sake."

"You're not happy!"

"I don't know—I'm afraid I think too much."

He was silent.

"You see women do," she went on, feeling that he did not understand. "Their lives are not filled up."

"But yours will be, I hope," he said gently.

He patted her shoulder and kissed her forehead. They sat for a while silent. Then she said:

"Amos, do you believe in God?"

"Who was it said a universe without a god would be even a greater mystery than one with one? Yes, I think I prefer the lesser of the two mysteries."

"Do you believe in Christ?" she asked in a low voice.

"Not as the orthodox believe," he answered; "but as one has always faith in a noble and beautiful character."

"I've wanted something to pray to since I knew about the child."

"I do not think I have ever felt the desire to pray," Dr. Penfold said simply; "but then, hard work is a great outlet for emotion."

"You see, I've had nothing to do," Barbara said, with faint satire in her voice. "I haven't your outlet."

The moment after, she was ashamed of having spoken so. The child must be protected from the faults of her own nature.

"Dear," she said suddenly, impetuously, "if I

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shouldn't make you happy I should never forgive myself."

He smiled.

"You do make me happy. I want nothing extraordinary. A little bread is enough for me."

She sighed. He asked so little. She wished that his life was one long demand on hers; but a thought came forward to comfort her. Another life was to be, which should demand all things of her—love, devotion, tenderness, sacrifice. Already that star beacons her to an immeasurable distance from the man by her side. She turned in sudden remorse, and drew a little closer to him, as if she in her turn had left him lonely.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### AT THE END OF THE TERM.

THE weeks that followed were for Barbara the happiest she had known since her marriage. As a woman unpossessed of the secret of married contentment, she had felt herself an intruder. As a guardian of a soul to be, dignity clothed her in a rich purple garment. The mother of the child dare not give way to doubt, to regret, to fruitless ponderings over the mystery of life; but must be hopeful, sunny, care-free. Barbara ransacked the innermost chambers of her soul for stored-away happiness, sunshine of long-ago summers, and scent of violets from vanished springs; even the indoor cheer of white winter from hearth-fires long extinguished. This heritage she gave to the child, with the added life of the present, long walks in the May sunshine, and votive offerings of the latest blossoms. When tired of the out-of-door day she spent hours in her room, no longer lonely, reading conscientiously the best books, her Virgil and her Shakespeare; even wandering into the pure and faultless classicism of Landor. During this time she developed an essentially spiritual and virginal beauty, united to earth by the happiness which infused it like rose-tint. Her husband, watching her with the almost timid wonder of a man so used to the abstract world that such a natural phenomenon as maternity seems strange and unreal, was glad of her peace. She ceased to haunt his work.



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Barbara's friends, the Emperor and Elizabeth, noting the change in her, reinforced her with their youth. The Emperor was skeptical of ultimate happiness for the oddly assorted pair, but the child might do much to bring content to its mother. Elizabeth's speculations went no further than the latest patterns of baby-clothes. The two girls spent as much time with Barbara as the press of end-of-the-year work and end-of-the-year gaiety would allow. The Emperor was to graduate, but her sorrow over this severing of ties was lessened by her intention to return the next year for her second degree. Her interest in it, however, was secondary to her interest in *College and State* and its editor, Waring. He had begged her to come back another year, saying he could not do without her help on the magazine. The Emperor was not unduly flattered, but the game of pitting her somewhat sardonic wit against his gallantry had never-ending attraction for her. One grudge she owed him—that he had not fallen in love with Barbara when Barbara was a freshman.

They sat together one June afternoon in the office, dusty and dull by contrast with the brilliant sunshine out-of-doors. The adjoining club-rooms were deserted. In May and June, the country about Hallworth taking on the loveliness of paradise, students roamed through it in every spare moment like children out of school. June especially was the time for heart-rending last trips to favorite places. The lake, the valley, the far blue hills, the ravines were visited by boys and girls kissing their hands to childhood. For to the world-worn and complacent senior came suddenly the realization on the eve of parting from Hallworth that it had been after

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all the guardian not of his manhood but of the last of his childhood. On the other side of commencement-day responsibilities waited gravely for him, to conduct him where the echo of boyish laughter, of dance music, of the hum of study, all the dear sounds of Alma Mater, would grow fainter and fainter. He would return, yes, but never again to the iridescent country.

The Emperor leaned back in her chair and yawned.

"Aren't you nearly through with that stupid proof?" she said. "I haven't the conscience to leave you to struggle with it alone."

"No, don't go," Waring implored; "wait just ten minutes, and then give me the pleasure of rowing you down the lake. Dutton is going to take Allaire and her mother to the Point for supper, and we might join them."

"The whole University must be on the lake this afternoon."

"Doubtless. We'll have our supper and come back by moonlight."

"Shall I keep still till you finish now?"

Waring smiled and bent over his proof.

Suddenly he looked up again.

"Have you decided on the list for the club reception?"

"Here it is."

He ran it over.

"Margrave, Joyce, Cartwright, Maturin, Mervale, Stafford, Penfold. By the way, what has become of Mrs. Penfold? I never see her when I call."

"Mrs. Penfold is not going out now," the Emperor said bluntly.

## AT THE END OF THE TERM

“Oh!”

He bent his head over his work again, knitting his dark brows and compressing his lips; calling himself a fool for asking such a question. A vague resentment stirred in him. As the news of Barbara's marriage had filled him with revolt, so this news aroused a strange kind of disdain. During her freshman year she had appealed strongly to certain sides of his nature. After her union with Penfold he forced himself to forget this appeal; but sometimes it made its existence known by such a surge of feeling as swept over him now. The girl he thought so rare had exchanged her rarity for the common lot of woman—had bartered herself for a home, a shelter.

He put her out of his mind, lest he should want to hate her. Throwing down the proof impatiently he turned to the Emperor.

“Let's leave this stuffiness. Can you go straight to the lake with me?”

“Straight. I'm choked with the dust of learning—sick of it.”

“Let's steer for the purple and gold, then,” Waring said, a reckless note in his voice. “We'll go where we can see the last sunlight against the little palisades.”

“Wait just a minute till I scribble a message to Elizabeth.”

He watched her as she wrote. This girl, with her pale, handsome face, inscrutable dark eyes and gallant bearing, had absorbed his earlier prejudices against her in a kind of good comradeship of her own making. Though he was noted for his chivalry, she for her coquetry, they had managed to meet and work together

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during the winter untroubled by the specter of sex. Both of them having rare capacity for friendship, they had become the best of friends. On this afternoon Waring, in a sudden longing for iridescence, wondered how she would respond to a challenge. Some one had said that reaction from overwork was responsible for most of the romances at Hallworth.

They were soon away to the lake. It welcomed them with a sweet fresh wind, rolling out as blue before them as if of melted turquoise.

"Shall I steer for the Point?" she said, as Waring pushed off.

"No; steer for Saunders's. We'll land there, and buy some sandwiches and things; and then go on to——"

"To the Point?"

"No. Why not let us have a picnic a deux, and eat our supper somewhere opposite the palisades?"

The Emperor regarded him a moment; then an amused expression came into her face. If this was to be the keynote of the expedition she was ready to respond to it. She too was bored.

He sent the boat flying through the water. The place, the scene, recalled Barbara, and a similar excursion. He frowned and bent over his oars. They passed many other boats, gay with boys and girls. Some of them bore lanterns in green and white for the evening's return.

"The senior class seems to be out in full force."

He raised his eyes to hers.

"I am more glad than I can say that you are coming back next year."

## AT THE END OF THE TERM

She smiled.

"I am afraid I am chiefly valuable to you as a staff-editor."

"Haven't we been too altruistic?" Waring said gently. "Sacrificed too much for that wretched magazine?"

His eyes were appealing. She met them nonchalantly.

"Tell me honestly what you think makes life worth living. Don't say anything sophomoric, please."

"Love and work."

"We've had a good deal of the latter," she said daringly, narrowing her eyes.

"Does the former come at call?" he returned in challenge.

"It depends on who calls."

Her eyes were mischievous. Waring longed to have her take him seriously, if only for a moment.

"Do you believe—in one love?"

"For big or little natures—yes. We in-betweens must console ourselves with many."

"Still, we are all haunted more or less by the vision of—one love," Waring said.

"Not in our lucid intervals."

"You drive me to pray for madness."

So they tilted while the boat flew on to its goal. By the time they had encamped on a bit of sandy beach, banked with pines, they had created by hard work quite a Watteau atmosphere of gallantry about themselves, with an amused sub-consciousness of its artificial nature. After supper they watched the rocks on the opposite shore turn from pink to gold and from gold to



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crimson as the sunset deepened. Then in the soft dull purple of the east a big moon arose.

"Hallworth—my Hallworth, I hear thy happy bells," Warring hummed, and the Emperor joined in the chorus of the University song. In the distance the towers rose grandly. Little lights flashed on the lake.

They sat for some time in silence, then Waring turned to her, his expressive face making the most of the moonlight.

"May I say some things to you?"

"It depends on what they are."

He smiled.

"They are eminently romantic."

"Then don't. To judge from your eyes they are much too good to be wasted on me. Save them up for the one great romance."

"But I belong to the in-betweens, by your own testimony."

"Richard Waring," the Emperor said solemnly, "nothing would cause me such keen, æsthetic delight as to hear the kind of English you'd make love in; but you'd be sorry some day you wasted it on me. You and I were born to be friends."

His hearty laugh rang out in the night. Then he said gravely, "Thank heaven for the gift of that friendship."

She extended her hand, and he shook it heartily.

"Let us never be romantic again," she said. "It is so wearing."

"What a disgraceful pun!"

The Emperor insisted on rowing back. Waring, steering the boat toward the distant lighthouse, gave

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himself up to dreams. The end of the college-year had found the beginning of his ambition realized. The future spread fair before him, interwoven with the future of Hallworth. He should make a bride of his university, he thought; work for her, dream for her, live for her.

## CHAPTER XX.

### TWO PLANETS.

“You say the new telescope is adequate?”

“Quite. Last night was cloudy, but the night before this little planet was plainly visible. To-night I think the conditions will be favorable again.”

Dr. Penfold and Dr. Weir, the astronomer of Hallworth, were seated on the porch of Dr. Penfold's house, screened from the glare of the August sun by a network of vines. Noon, shadowless, stinging, stale, flattened out the campus, which in its silence and desertion resembled a city of the dead. The summer-school was over; the last eager student had departed. Hallworth was in the comatose state which preceded the activities of the fall.

Dr. Weir, full of enthusiasm over his observations of the newly discovered planet Eros, had braved the unsheltered stretch of lawn which separated his house from Dr. Penfold's that he might submit some calculations to the mathematician, and beg his assistance for the coming night. The two were talking eagerly, earnestly, when Mehitabel appeared at the door and asked a word with her master.

“Don't let me detain you further,” Dr. Weir said, rising; “but you will surely come to-night?”

“Without fail. About what time?”

“About eleven, if convenient.”

Dr. Penfold found Barbara stretched on the bed, her

## TWO PLANETS

face, through the twilight of the room, looking white and drawn. A deep, tragic shadow of coming agony was in her eyes. During these last weeks of sultry summer her idealism had failed her, leaving her stranded in a desert of material realities. She lay mute and baffled on this August noon; less creator than victim.

Dr. Penfold bent over her.

"My dear, do you feel ill?"

"Very ill," she answered, in a suffocated voice.

"Is your nurse here?"

"She has just come."

"Barbara, dear, do you want me to stay with you?"

"Not if you have to work."

"I don't have to work."

"It is very sultry, isn't it?"

"The heat is most oppressive."

"Who were you talking with on the porch?"

"Dr. Weir. He wants me to assist him to-night at some observations of Eros."

She caught her breath.

"You will not stay away very long?"

"Why, no, my dear. Not if you'd rather have me here."

"It doesn't matter!" she said wearily.

There was a long pause.

"What day of the month is it?" she asked.

"The twenty-fourth of August."

"People do not die so easily in summer as in winter, do they?"

"Why, Barbara, dear, you are not afraid of dying?"

"Yes," she said faintly, then added, "not of dying—"

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no, that is not it—but one doesn't want to die, so ignorant—knowing nothing—nothing—nothing.”

He thought her feverish and tried to soothe her; but the pain and confusion increasing upon her, he went at last to summon help.

The weary day wore itself out. Dr. Penfold, glad to be excluded by doctor and nurse from a sick-room, where he was conscious only of his forty years' isolation from common human interests, went over to the library and buried himself in the German seminary-room.

Returning to dinner, he was told to his relief that Barbara had not asked for him again; and that in all probability there would still be hours of tedious waiting. At eleven, having no further word, he departed for the observatory, glad to escape from the oppressively silent house. Once there, and the wonders of the heavens unrolling before him through the great telescope, a recent magnificent gift to the University, he forgot the perplexing affairs of earth in the contemplation of Eros.

Between two and three in the morning Barbara was lying on her bed, white and still and passive, as a body prepared for its last rest. Her soul, retreated from the scene of its physical anguish, seemed yet beyond call. The physician, an old man, who stood at the foot of the bed, looking down upon her with grave compassion, hoped that this ebb of vital force might carry her beyond any question concerning the child. At that moment Mehitabel was weeping bitterly in an adjoining room over its lifeless form.

The physician watched and waited. Barbara opened



## TWO PLANETS

her eyes at last and gazed at him dreamily from a great distance. Then her soul came back.

"Has he seen the child?" she whispered.

"Dr. Penfold? No; he has not yet returned."

"I remember—Eros."

She was passive again. Then a light stole into her face.

"I want my baby."

"Not just yet, Mrs. Penfold. You are very weak yet—after a while," the doctor said soothingly.

She looked at him with a sudden keenness vivifying her eyes.

"You need not be—afraid. I will be calm—still—only let me see my child."

"Not for a little while," he said with decision.

An expression of fear, of distrust, stole into her face.

"Will you send for Dr. Penfold?"

"I will go myself."

Mehitabel accompanied him to the door. She was large-eyed and haggard. "However is she to be told?" she said in a hoarse voice. "She set her heart on that baby."

"Gradually, my good woman."

"Mrs. Penfold's not the one to be told gradually. She wants the truth. Her husband ought to be with her, 'stead of star-gazing."

The doctor shrugged his shoulders. Mehitabel in the character of an old servant was sometimes abominably plain-spoken.

Dr. Penfold hurried home through the thick darkness

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which precedes the dawn. The news that his child had been still-born filled him with a vague sorrow, which was wholly for Barbara. He reproached himself for remaining so long at the observatory. He would be very tender to her, he thought; very attentive during her recovery. The nurse met him at the door and they went up-stairs together in silence.

At the threshold of Barbara's room she whispered:

"You must not let her know just yet—for a few hours."

Her startled cry following upon her words, her glance, her gesture, brought him sharply to himself. The bed was empty.

She hesitated but an instant, then her professional instinct guided her straight to the room across the hall. Dr. Penfold followed her, his face blanched with sudden, nameless fear. As she threw open the door he saw Barbara lying unconscious on the bed, one arm about the form of her child.

BOOK THIRD

THE WOMAN.



## CHAPTER XXI.

### INTO WARING'S CARE.

MRS. MATURIN sat in her library awaiting Barbara, whom she had asked to afternoon tea.

On her return from abroad she had heard of Mrs. Penfold's desperate illness and slow recovery, and meeting her one October day on the campus she had extended a special invitation to her, moved by Barbara's white, sad face and remote manner, as of one dwelling with ghosts.

While she waited for her she examined her afternoon mail. Among a number of business letters was a formal invitation from the editor of *College and State* to a reception for the junior class, at the club-rooms, and a short note from Perceval on a matter connected with his mission. Over this note she sighed a little. Its crisp, businesslike wording, scarcely friendly, betrayed the leash. Mrs. Maturin's spirit, turned by grief into a barometrical register of others' moods and emotions, divined hidden tempests under the priest's calm, somewhat worldly demeanor. In her girlhood such a combination of feeling and restraint of feeling would have pleased her as the most perfect form of homage. Now, robbed by a supreme love and a supreme memory of all passion, save the maternal, she was distressed by this growing knowledge of Perceval's struggle. That he would ever speak she doubted, knowing his devotion to the religion of silence. Moreover, she divined dimly that something more than her own preoccupation with the



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dead withheld him. He seemed to her a man who, like herself, though perhaps from antipodal causes, had given inviolable pledges to the past.

"It is good of you to come to me to-day, dear Mrs. Penfold."

Barbara smiled faintly as she advanced toward her hostess. The tragic virginity of those unmarried in the spirit was about her in all its bleakness.

"I didn't want to come at all, but I had promised you," she said, with a reckless frankness which Mrs. Maturin at once took note of as a possible key to her guest's hidden temperament. She had never been able to find Mrs. Penfold behind the apparent simplicity of her youth and inexperience.

"I am glad I had bound you by a promise."

"Was I rude? Perhaps you know what it is to feel as if you did not wish to go anywhere."

"I do, indeed. Sit here. I will put the glass screen before the fire, so that we shall miss nothing."

Barbara sank into the chair as one physically weary.

"Those purple flames are beautiful," she said. "Do you ever long for certain colors according to your mood?"

"Let me show you something."

She rose and went to a set of cedar drawers, built in between the bookcases. From one of them she took a cope of purple velvet, heavily embroidered with gold.

"We picked this up in Venice—we bought it for the delicious color. How an ecclesiastical vestment came to be on sale I don't know."

"What a glorious purple! And it gleams almost red where the light catches it."

## INTO WARING'S CARE

"I take it out sometimes on colorless days in winter."

Barbara drew the heavy folds around her, feasting her eyes on the color, as if it gave her life. She examined the hem curiously.

"It is a running design of a grape-vine; at the corners are the instruments of the Passion," Mrs. Maturin said.

Barbara leaned back in the chair, enveloped in the cope, its rich purple throwing into relief the pallor of her face.

"Are you quite well again? I was more sorry than I can say when I learned that—your little child did not—live."

Tears came into Barbara's eyes. She turned away her head, saying nothing.

Mrs. Maturin bent over the letters scattered on a near-by table. "Do you remember Madge Henry?" she asked.

"Very well," Barbara said, recovering herself.

"I heard from her this morning. She is to marry Mr. McVeagh in a fortnight."

"She loved him very much. They should be very happy," Barbara said, half under her breath.

"I think they will be. What solidity of character Madge gained she gained by this devotion, and she raised him at last to a higher level."

"He wasn't a good man—was he?"

"No; but she would have cared in any case. I sometimes believe in destiny."

"I believe in it altogether," Barbara said, the sadness creeping into her voice again. "We think we are

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free, but we are children. We wake up—we grow up and find ourselves bound.”

She spoke without bitterness, and with a curious calm of acceptance which seemed to Mrs. Maturin more tragic than revolt. Mrs. Penfold was plainly not a happy woman. Whether this unhappiness was transitory, due to the loss of the child, or permanent, due to deeper causes, she could not tell. In either case, the part of youth should have been rebellion, not apathy.

“I am going to give a dinner to the President early in November,” Mrs. Maturin said, moved to a challenge. “May I depend on you?”

Barbara turned her large eyes toward her a moment with a curious, questioning expression.

“I do not want to go out so soon after the death of my child.”

“But should you—stay in for——”

“For—for a child that didn’t live, you mean—that never drew a breath.” She sat up straight in the chair, the heavy purple velvet shrouding her slender form, all the life in her face concentrated in her appealing eyes. “They all say that to me—but they don’t know. To them it was nothing—it had no life, no personality—but to me——”

Her voice broke.

Mrs. Maturin’s eyes were dim.

“To you it was a soul—with all a soul’s possibilities. Yes; I understand.”

Barbara’s voice softened.

“I know you do.”

Mrs. Maturin studied a moment. To some moods silence must minister, to others speech.

## INTO WARING'S CARE

She began to speak in a gentle voice.

"To you—through you, it lived its life—was a child—a man—a citizen of the world. You watched the years enrich it. Ah, I know! I who never had a child. You have its soul still to love and cherish. I have only my dream-children."

Barbara's face was growing calmer.

"You think it had a soul," she whispered; "though it didn't breathe once?"

"You know the beautiful story of the Visitation in St. Luke?" Mrs. Maturin said.

"Yes. I can believe it now. It was written for mothers."

Mrs. Maturin, seizing the fortunate moment of the spirit's happier state, proceeded to reinforce the flesh. She fixed a cup of tea for Barbara and made her eat and drink.

In the same hour Waring was calling on Dr. Penfold. He had gone to the house fearful lest he should intrude on a crisis of work, but to his surprise had received a welcome which from the mathematician was little short of enthusiastic.

"Come into the study," Dr. Penfold said, after the first greeting. "I should like to have a little talk with you."

Impressed by the earnestness of his host's manner, he followed him wonderingly into the study, filled at this hour with the level radiance of the setting sun.

"Sit down. Will you smoke—no? I haven't had a chance to ask you about your summer, we have been rushed so."

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"A month in the mountains and two months in New York."

Dr. Penfold nodded. One thin, delicately modeled hand, yellow tinged as if carved in ivory, played with the papers on the desk. The blue eyes were unusually keen.

"You have heard, no doubt, of our summer. Barbara's—Barbara's child did not live."

"Yes, I heard and was very sorry."

"She was desperately ill. At the end of September I took her to the shore. She seems restored now to physical health; but she grieves in a way that seems to me unnatural."

Waring's eyes grew grave.

"I suppose those things go very deep with women."

"The doctor says she must have her mind diverted. I assure you, Waring, I am perfectly inadequate to the task."

He smiled, but the smile was anxious.

"I never cared for society. If I had I couldn't have gone into it. My work now calls for every particle of time and strength I possess. But I want her to go out—to enjoy herself—to be willing to go without me. That's the point—to be willing to go without me. Last year she would not. Consequently she went out little. This year I hope she will."

Waring listened in astonishment. Never before had Dr. Penfold shown such earnest attention to a practical matter.

"What I want to ask you is this. If you will use your influence to persuade her to take a little pleasure, to put off that black gown and go out. Invitations came



## INTO WARING'S CARE

this morning, but she put them aside; said she did not care to accept them."

"Not a good state of mind for any one as young as—Mrs. Penfold," Waring said. "Indeed, I will do my best to change it."

"I must be frank," said Dr. Penfold naively. "I am not altogether disinterested in this. I can work better when I know she is well and happy."

"Naturally."

"I hear the front door opening. Perhaps that is she now."

He rose and went to the head of the stairs.

"Barbara, my dear, is that you?"

Her voice in answer seemed to Waring clear and confident. A moment later she entered the room, holding out her hand in the frank, friendly way which always delighted him. He discovered a dawning beauty in her clear, intense face. If she had suffered, suffering had given to her features a new charm. Grief disfigures age, but enhances whatever loveliness youth possesses.

Waring, the influence of Dr. Penfold's earnest manner still full upon him, went straight to the point.

"Did you receive my invitation to the club reception?"

"This morning," Barbara answered.

"Would you do me the great favor of helping us receive?"

Barbara hesitated, but she had not yet emerged from the influence of Mrs. Maturin's words.

"You should, you know, because it is a reception to the junior class—your own class."

"I will come," she said.

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Her husband looked relieved.

"We are getting to be as scheming as a Tammany politician," Waring laughed. "We're planning a series of receptions, and the staff hopes to make itself so fascinating that each guest will suddenly turn into a subscriber."

"Do we subscribe, Amos?"

"I think not, my dear."

She laughed.

"May I turn into a subscriber? I'll get the money now."

As she left the room, Dr. Penfold said to Waring: "I haven't heard her laugh like that this fall. Get her interested in this club of yours if you can."

"I'll do my best."

She returned with the money.

"Now, you must promise to read the articles every month," Waring said, "and tell me what you think of them. Dr. Hunt writes in the October number on 'The Decline of Classical Study.' That should interest you with your knowledge of Greek and Latin."

He spoke half-jestingly, but his eyes, regarding her, were earnest.

"Is the Emperor still an editor?"

"Very much so—writes the best editorials, to my thinking."

"A very clever young woman, is she not?" said Dr. Penfold.

"One of the cleverest I ever knew. She ought to be a lawyer."

"But she is lovely, too," Barbara said, with the tone of the champion.

## INTO WARING'S CARE

"She has too great a sense of humor to take her cleverness with solemnity. Let me show you an editorial of hers on this year's athletics. It's deliciously witty."

"If you'll excuse me," Dr. Penfold said, "I'll go to my desk. Barbara, keep Mr. Waring to dinner."

At the door he turned round and looked contentedly at the two dark heads bent over the magazine. He anticipated with a thrill of pleasure an hour's work untroubled by the thought of his wife's isolation and sadness. He was genuinely fond of Barbara, and wished to see her happy.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### PERDITA.

PERDITA RAVENEL, though possessed of fascination in any environment, was at the height of her charm in her own drawing-room, according to the testimony of certain professors and post-graduates, to whom she symbolized an oasis in the desert of Hallworth. One enthusiast unblushingly said at a dinner that he no longer aimed for Columbia, since New York in the guise of a lady had come to Sparta. The girls of Stafford Hall imitated her clothes, and some of them cut off from masculine society enwreathed her with romance.

The intricate comedy of university life interested her to such a degree that few points of it escaped her. From the loneliest freshman to Dr. Hunt, no one was out of the range of her sympathy, which in its last analysis was perhaps a highly sublimated and intellectual curiosity. Perdita was seldom bored, though in her rare moments of boredom she knew the reason for crime. Ennui and wickedness seemed mutually explanatory.

On this October afternoon when Barbara and Waring were bending over *College and State*, she sat in her drawing-room with Dutton, a non-committal apartment, bare of pictures and books, those betrayers of personality, but rich in mirrors of quaint design, picked up on her travels. These mirrors reflected her peculiar extravagance of daily living, long wax candles in candlesticks

## PERDITA

of odd shapes. For the rest, the furniture was not too French to be comfortable.

She was leaning back in a long, low chair, regarding Dutton with kind, if somewhat amused, eyes. Of all the younger men in the University, Dutton and Waring interested her most, the one for his charming simplicity and noble lack of ambition; the other for his complexity and poetical presence of ambition. With them alone to watch, life would not have been devoid of entertainment at Hallworth. Perdita, as a rule, kept her fund of seriousness for the performance of her obligations toward her wards; her lighter moods being wholly at the service of her friends. To-night some wistfulness in Dutton's face inclined her to give him a chance to talk seriously.

"You don't look quite as renewed as a man ought after his summer vacation," she said.

"I didn't get away at all. I taught in the summer-school. Then I worked on my text-book steadily till term opened."

"Please don't tell me you're writing a book, too! I thought you so beautifully exempt—in the midst of these book-writers. I made a canvass in June for my private information. Twenty-three books had been written during the year. That's not counting Professor Leonard's History."

"He expects to get the third volume out this fall. I only wish I could do such a work. Mine is merely a text-book for the use of schools, and a publisher still to be found!"

"But why write it at all? It can't be much pleasure."

"It isn't. But if you don't have your name on the



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title-page of a book you don't rise." Then as Perdita looked sympathetic he added, "It isn't the teaching they want first of all. They ask of a man what has he written, what investigations has he made, is he specializing? And if so, has he made any discoveries, written anything on his specialty?"

"Ah, I see!" Perdita said. She had seen from the first, but asked questions to draw Dutton out, an enterprise she rarely indulged in unless she knew the other person would respond gladly.

"I see. You want to push on further."

"Who doesn't?" Dutton said mournfully. "Unless a man gets a professorship in a university he can scarcely live decently, much less——"

He drew back from the brink of his words, but a delicate flush, tale-telling, overspread his face. Perdita smiled. She had watched Dutton and Allaire for some time.

"Much less ever make a home for himself," she said. "Of all professions a professorship is the most underpaid."

He beamed under her sympathy.

"I wish you'd write an article on that for *College and State*."

She laughed.

"I'm afraid I'd say too much, but it's a good idea. Ask your editor to write it."

"Waring? I know he'd refuse if he had the remotest idea you'd do it."

"Well, perhaps I will," Perdita said. She was wondering in what way to assist Dutton. The record of his patient, industrious life begun on a farm not many miles

## PERDITA

from Hallworth had once been told her without embellishment by Waring, who ceased to be complex when talking of a friend. Wire-pulling, though not much indulged in at Hallworth, was still an element in university life. The president, the trustees, the faculty represented power, which, at the service of the University in the main, might be diverted for the benefit of the individual. Dr. Hunt, whose eye was on every man, had as yet made no extraordinary discoveries concerning Dutton; and promotion was largely dependent on brilliancy of promise. Moreover, Dutton had not all the social graces, only those which keep a man more or less in the background. He had neither Waring's "trick of rising," as some one had called it, nor Waring's nonchalance. His essentially democratic spirit was more closely allied to the early Hallworth than to the Hallworth of the present, demanding of its servants not only profound scholarship and untiring labor but much savoir faire in the world of their choice.

"You say you have yet to find a publisher. I know very well a publisher of text-books in New York, an old friend of my father. Would you like me to give you a letter?"

Dutton hesitated.

"No, thank you very much; but I'd rather it would go on its own merits—poor little book!"

"I am sure its merits will carry it far."

Dutton looked pleased. He felt that even this polite prophecy of success justified him in calling that afternoon on Allaire, and he rose to take his leave.

"You are coming to the reception of the junior class?"

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"The editor-in-chief has been kind enough to ask me to receive."

"And you will write the article?"

"Yes; I think I shall."

After he had gone the impulse seized her to take the twilight walk so much in vogue at Hallworth during the spring and fall. Half an hour later found her at one of her favorite spots, a bridge over the wide, brawling stream, which farther down narrowed and deepened between the walls of the gorge. From one of its timber supports she could watch the sunset redden behind the tall black pines. The rush of the water intensified the enveloping silence. In the distance some crows flapped their way through the still air above a field of stacked corn. Perdita, for the moment weary of a university and all its works, wished that she might take her supper with some farmer and talk cow or crops. Then she fell to wondering if the romance of the bucolic state could survive a winter of pork and pie. The sunset, at this point, signalled her with flame of crimson and scarlet to come back to the ideal world, and her spirit retreating again into the hush of the hour, her eyes fixed on that splendor of the west became dreamy, wide as those of a child.

She was aroused from her reverie by something sniffing at the hem of her dress. Looking down she saw Melampus of the bowed legs, his disdainful upper lip revealing two sharp little teeth. A moment later his master emerged from the twilight.

"I was hoping you were not far behind. I like Melampus, but I'm afraid it's a case of unrequited affection."

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Dr. Hunt smiled.

"It's a tradition among the sophomores that Melampus is friendly to every one in the University but a freshman. They say he can pick out a freshman in a roomful."

"Pretty doggie!"

"Don't mock him. I assure you he understands Greek."

"What do you mean?"

"I have a habit of reading aloud. If it's a Greek author, Melampus looks the picture of content; but if I begin Latin, he immediately shows unmistakable signs of distress, and scratches at the study door to be let out."

"Are you serious?"

"I am, indeed. I exhibited him to a roomful the other evening, first reading from Aristophanes, then from Lucretius. When I began 'De Rerum Natura' Melampus promptly begged to be excused."

Perdita laughed, leaning over to pat the stubborn, massive head.

"Don't you think it is late enough for you to turn back?" Dr. Hunt said. "These country roads are lonely after nightfall."

Perdita rose, inwardly welcoming the prospect of a conversation. If she were skilful she might bring it around to young, struggling professors in general and to Dutton in particular. As it was obvious to the whole University that Dutton was devoted to Allaire Sordello, she ran no risk of her interest in him being misunderstood.

But even her skill could not guide the conversation,



## THE LAW OF LIFE

deflected as it was by Dr. Hunt's evident preoccupation. She abandoned the attempt at last and came into his atmosphere, walking beside him silently. Her silence at last acting as a kind of challenge, he turned to her abruptly.

"Has any one told you of the proceedings of yesterday's Faculty meeting?"

"No; I have heard nothing of them."

"They'll be generally known by next week. I have introduced a measure which I think I can push through, though there is a strong opposition."

"I hope it is a bill for raising the salaries of the professors," Perdita said lightly.

"On the contrary, I wish to raise the students' fees; to make the terms of the year's tuition just double."

"Do you think that a good measure?" Perdita said daringly. "Wouldn't it exclude many worthy students?"

"Undoubtedly. But it should do away with that objectionable element in Hallworth, student labor. The fees now are low enough to admit of a boy's working his way through Hallworth, and doing justice neither to the furnace he tends nor to his Greek."

Perdita smiled.

"The worst waiters we have at the Hall are students. The girls are always in trepidation lest the soup should be spilled over them."

"And surely they don't make the better scholars for such absent-mindedness," Dr. Hunt said.

"But in the early days of the University it was beneficial. Didn't Dr. Penfold work his way through Hallworth?"



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"Dr. Penfold, yes. But he is a brilliant exception. If education had cost a thousand a year he would have procured it. It was in him. But these students are not, as a rule, a credit to the University."

"Do you not believe, then, in making the higher education free?"

"On the contrary, I think it ought to be made as costly as possible."

"You said there was strong opposition in the Faculty."

"Yes, a strong minority—but fortunately a minority."

Perdita was wondering on which side Waring stood—probably with the opposition. The President was silent for a few moments, then as if in answer to her thoughts he said: "Quixotic youth is almost as dangerous in society as a dynamite torpedo. Richard Waring heads the opposition."

"He is a born idealist."

"And much too brilliant to be one. That magazine of his—so youthfully clever—resembles a tourney field."

Perdita laughed.

"It is harmless, isn't it?"

"It might be if its editor were not so likeable. He's a favorite with the students, and in consequence *College and State* is so much gospel to them. However, it's a very creditable production to issue from Hallworth. I am not quarreling with it."

"And you like its editor?"

"Immensely. I should never wish to come into serious conflict with him because of the personal equation."

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They had reached the campus by this time, and he conducted her to the entrance of Stafford Hall, refusing, however, her invitation to come in for a cup of tea. The instinct of self-preservation being uppermost, he was already wondering why he had talked so confidentially to a mere woman.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### A RETURN TO YOUTH.

ON the night of the reception to the junior class the club-rooms of the League, as yet empty, were brilliant with lights and flowers. Mrs. Maturin had contributed all the roses in her greenhouses, together with enough palms to stack the corners and render the cushions shadowy. The girls of the League, flushed and triumphant, had gone home to dress.

Waring was the first to arrive.

"It's pretty enough for a wedding," he said aloud, as he stood a moment pulling off his gloves and looking about him. Then some afterthought drew his hand to a package in an inner pocket. He pulled out the proof of an article for the December number of *College and State* and sat down to glance over it. After a few moments he rose and went into the office. He had thought it deserted, but Frederick Clyde, now a senior, sat by the table, in a circle cast by a green-shaded electric light. His attitude was dejected, and he seemed unaware of Waring's entrance, until the latter laid a hand lightly on his shoulder.

"If you're coming to-night, it's time to go and dress, else you will have to leave by way of the window."

"I don't feel very much like it, to tell the truth. If Eliz—if Miss King weren't coming I shouldn't bother."

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"What's the matter? Are you tired?"

"No—blue."

"Blue?" said Waring gaily. "The president of the senior class, and engaged to the prettiest girl in Hallworth, come, come, Clyde, what's the matter?"

"Just this. If they raise the fees at Hallworth my post-graduate course in electrical engineering is out of the question. That means business instead of a profession—and—long waiting."

Waring knew for what, but his sympathy for Clyde was tempered by his deep-rooted prejudice against student engagements.

He looked at him keenly.

"How did you hear of this new measure?"

"Your Faculty meetings are not so private as you members think. It has leaked out, anyway. If it should go through Dr. Hunt would be mobbed."

"If it should go through Dr. Hunt would probably disperse the mob with a quotation from Horace. If you promise to hold your tongue, Clyde, I will tell you that I am in full battle array at the head of the opposition."

"I thought you'd be human."

"Read this."

He placed the proof before him. Clyde read the title, "The Cost of Tuition and Its Influence on College Life."

"You're not taking up the cudgels——?"

"Not at all. It has purely a general application. Should the measure go through, it would then be time enough to make war openly."

Clyde glanced down the article.

"Where did you get all these figures?"

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"I sent for the registers of all the prominent colleges and universities."

"Good work! Do stand by us. It's all very well for the rich men, but we men whose fathers are on salary——"

"I don't think Hunt will push it—but keep quiet about it, Clyde. Now off with you. It's after eight,"

Barbara had dressed for the reception in the gown the Emperor planned for her the year before. She put it on with some compunctions, remembering the little dead child dear to her alone. Yet when Mehitabel, hovering about her, had fastened the last hook and turned her to the mirror, she felt a sudden lightening of the spirit.

"That's right, smile a little," the good woman said. Ever since the birth and Barbara's grave illness she had felt a peculiar tenderness for her mistress. Her delight was great when Mrs. Penfold announced her intention of going to the reception.

"Do you want them roses in your hair?"

"I think not. I'm too gay as it is."

"They'd look real pretty; just let me try 'em."

"Not to-night, Mehitabel. Have you my gloves and cloak? Bring them to the study."

Her husband was bending over his desk, in the everlasting attitude of work. To what end? to what end? she sometimes thought, smothered by the intensity of his application. The scholarship of her uncle had had its poetical aspects—her husband's seemed purely abstract.

He raised his head and his eyes brightened. He noticed her dress—glad of what it represented—a more



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cheerful mood in her, and freedom to pursue his work untroubled by certain responsibilities to which he felt himself unequal.

"You look well, my dear. I hope you will have a good time."

"I wish you were going too," she said wistfully.

"A mathematician has no business in society. But you'll make me happy if you go and enjoy yourself. Accept your invitations as they come. They all know me here for a recluse; but they would be defrauded should you turn into one."

It was the first gallant speech he had ever attempted, and the effort of it brought the color to his face. Barbara's smile of pleasure rewarded him. She leaned over and kissed him.

"I shall miss you very much. Mehitabel is going out to-night, but should you want a glass of milk, there is one ready in the pantry and a box of biscuits by it."

"Thank you, my dear."

As the front door closed on her he turned contentedly to his work. It was certainly more comforting to be cared for by a wife than by a servant.

Perdita Ravenel, gowned in black chiffon, which threw into relief the whiteness of her neck and shoulders, and wearing for her only ornament an old-fashioned necklace of topazes, was talking with Waring between greetings. She possessed for him a distinctly intellectual charm, heightened and supplemented by her peculiar, unclassified beauty. He sometimes wondered why he was not in love with her. That he was not seemed to him the loss of an enriching experience.

## A RETURN TO YOUTH

"I hear you are leading the opposition in our House of Hallworth?"

"In the matter of the tuition fees? Yes. I am afraid we shall not win out."

"You are plucky to array yourself against the President and his majority."

"It's not a case of pluck exactly. I am trying to defend what seems to me one of the essential ideals of Hallworth."

She smiled.

"But you can't expect a university to stand still. What was good for Hallworth in its extreme youth might not be good for it now."

"But this exclusive policy will exclude the very students the University needs—those of the middle class."

She made no answer, but the expression of her eyes involved him suddenly in a mesh of youth. He turned to the Emperor, who stood near him, an embodied magnet for students.

"Is the President coming?"

"I think he is if he obeys my instructions."

"What audacious thing have you been saying to him?"

"Nothing audacious. I met him on the campus, and told him I could vouch for the coffee to-night; you know he adores strong coffee with thick cream in it."

Waring laughed.

"What did he say?"

"He said that coffee was the one factor of the modern world which kept him from wishing that he had lived in the days of Pericles."

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At that moment Barbara entered. Waring had watched the door closely, conscious that he would be keenly disappointed should she fail him at the last moment. Since his conversation with Dr. Penfold a certain restraint had been taken from him. He could show his friendliness unreservedly. Her husband wished it, desired it. He was at liberty to respond to the appeal which she had always made to certain elements of his nature. As he greeted her he thought she looked unusually well, if not beautiful, distinguished. He was realizing through her that the monotony of mere prettiness was due less to a community of pink and white than to the fact that the owners of the pink and white thought and felt and acted with the blind imitation of sheep. Barbara had not danced with the rest, gossiped with the rest, tried on ribbons with the rest, and the difference was in her face.

"I was afraid you weren't coming."

"I had promised you."

"I shall always bind you with a promise."

Perdita was looking at Barbara with sincere admiration in her eyes. She too was keenly appreciative of unusual types of women.

"I am so glad you are here to-night."

"Thank you. It is my class, you know."

"Ah, yes. You would have been a junior."

Barbara, shaking hands with the young men and girls as they came in, recognized many of her former classmates, and was glad that she could call some of them by name without an introduction. It seemed to her now that she had been living in a dream during her freshman year, and she was eager to make amends for what-

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ever sins of omission she had committed when dreaming. She envied these former classmates, still young and care-free. To herself she seemed a thousand years old.

Among those who shook hands with her was a gallant young junior wearing his youth and his enjoyment of the occasion like a flower in his coat. Barbara recognized the Boy of her first social appearance at Hallworth, the heroic freshman who from a deep sense of duty had asked her if he could take her in to supper.

"You do not recognize me?"

He blushed, but plunged into gallantry, still disciplining his shy self to meet the occasion.

"Do you remember the Dean's reception in your freshman year? I was there, a classmate, and you asked if you could take me in to supper. We were neither of us quite happy; then some one came along and offered to take charge of me instead."

A light broke over his face.

"Oh. I do remember—but—but you are not in our class now?"

"No. I am Mrs. Penfold."

The astonishment in his eyes when he identified her with the black-gowned girl of that year did not escape her. She wondered whether she had changed greatly; or was it the gown?

"I missed the pleasure once. May I take you into supper to-night?"

"Indeed, yes."

She was glad that he wanted to take her in; that she was not altogether removed from these her mates by the fact of her marriage. Despite her youth she was beginning to class herself unconsciously with those who

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have lived and suffered. Life represented to her at this period all the experiences which come after marriage. She had yet to learn that the spirit can annul experience.

The rooms had become crowded. The majority of the guests were students, but two or three members of the Faculty looked in for a moment, not staying long enough to show that they took the League too seriously. After a while the President came in, and greeted the receiving women with a certain elaborate courtesy which in Perdita's mind linked him to an earlier generation. She sometimes wondered if it were an embroidered cloak for a deep-rooted scorn of the sex.

He shook hands warmly with Waring. To his cold and critical temper the youthful idealism of this man pleased him by very force of contrast, pleased and amused him.

After the first greeting he said abruptly:

"Are you going to carry your campaign into your magazine?"

Waring blushed like a schoolgirl. Then he walked desperately into the truth.

"I have written an article on the cost of tuition and its effect on college life—it has only a general application."

"May I ask a favor of you? May I glance over it?"

"Certainly, Dr. Hunt. If you will step into the office you will be undisturbed."

He led the way to the den and ensconced the great man in the editorial chair. The President looked about the bare, littered office with some amusement—at the desks heaped with papers, at the ink-blots on the uncarpeted floor—at the letter-files.



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"This is certainly not amateurish," he said.

"We saved the frills for the other rooms."

"A student is the most pampered creature on earth. It wasn't so in my day. We had more Greek and less luxury. Ah, this is already in proof—the December number?"

"The December number."

"Don't let me detain you."

"You aren't detaining me—I will run over this file."

For ten minutes there was deep silence. Then the President laid down the proof.

"I congratulate you," he said dryly, "however I disagreed with the premises. Shall we return to the reception? A post-graduate has promised me a cup of coffee."

He was thinking that Waring's cleverness might some day need a check, but as yet the rein could be held loosely, for the sake of the audacious merit of the magazine. *College and State* had already obtained an intercollegiate reputation—was indeed a somewhat conspicuous feather in the cap of Hallworth.

"You must be tired; may I take you in to supper?"

"Thank you, but one of the juniors has already asked me."

Waring was distinctly conscious of being disappointed. He had hoped for a little talk with Barbara. Incidentally he wished to ask her to remind Dr. Penfold of the next Faculty meeting, and to secure her interest in the tuition-fee measure.

"May I ask if I may see you home when you are ready to go?"

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“Thank you, yes.”

He watched her go away on the arm of the young junior, and found himself thinking what an interesting task it would be to turn the Madonna into a woman of the world; no longer dreaming but doing. He had always been aware of the possibilities underlying Barbara's immaturity; but the temptation to appeal to them had ceased with her marriage—to Waring's mind the very seal of her arrested development.

The Emperor had gone in with the President, and Waring, the sense of duty strong upon him, looked about for an unappropriated girl. Finding none, and conscience being satisfied, he went to the supper-room. Mrs. Maturin was sitting by Barbara, and he joined them.

“I have just been telling Mrs. Penfold that I will not let her off from my dinner on the tenth.”

“But Dr. Penfold will not dine out this winter,” Barbara said simply. “And I should not go to dinners without him, should I?”

“Every one regrets that Dr. Penfold's work does not allow him more freedom,” Mrs. Maturin said. “But since every one understands that it is so, the usual rule does not apply in your case—does it, Mr. Waring?”

“I think it quite imperative that Mrs. Penfold should not desert us.”

“Then you will come,” Mrs. Maturin said, with gentle insistence. Barbara looked from one to the other of them. Both represented a certain social authority. What they told her she could believe. But something deeper, more vital than their word was influencing her decision—a desire to forget for a while, as this evening

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she had forgotten, the bewilderment and intermittent pain of her life since her marriage, a desire strengthened by the realization that her husband could do his work better if she at least seemed amused and cheerful. For the first time in her short existence the obligation to play a part was presented to her. His look of content as she left him had taught her much. If she could not give him positive aid in his work, as she had once dreamed, she might aid him in this negative way—by not being on his mind. She looked into Waring's face and their eyes met.

"I will come," she said, then remembering, turned to Mrs. Maturin.

"Have I made it clear to you?" Waring said. "You see just why I want Dr. Penfold on our side."

She had been listening eagerly, as they walked up the hill together after the reception, to his account of the new measure and what it stood for. Her sympathies, aroused by her contact that evening with her old class, made her peculiarly responsive. Waring, feeling this newly awakened interest in the student life of Hallworth, took instant advantage of it by citing those among the juniors who would suffer by the change. Through Barbara he could thus reach her husband.

As they parted he said to her:

"You will remind Dr. Penfold, will you not, at the first opportunity, of the coming Faculty meeting, and explain what is up for discussion? We can't do without his vote."

"I will do all in my power to help you," she said eagerly.

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She went into the house more content than she had been for months.

It was good to be asked to perform some definite service.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING WORLDLY.

"MUST I have another dress?"

"But, Barbara, if you are going out this winter you'll have to have two or three more."

"I did not know they were so worldly at Hallworth!"

"There is only one unworldly community that I know of," said the Emperor, "and that isn't in this world."

She vouchsafed no further information as to its whereabouts. Barbara smiled.

"You are good to help me with these matters. Indeed, I am grateful."

"There is a certain piquancy in planning your worldly garments, and I am depending on them to keep you with us a little longer."

Barbara blushed, as one detected in cowardice.

"What do you mean?"

"When I returned this fall you seemed ready to slip out of life. That is not good. You are too old to die. I want you to be young first."

They planned dresses until the twilight closed in upon them. The Emperor felt for Barbara the one strong and unselfish affection of her university life. Understanding her temperament, she yet never intruded her comprehension. Conscious now of a crisis, her chief desire was to aid in tiding her friend over it. She was



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fearful lest Barbara, feeling herself at a disadvantage in the social life of Hallworth, should withdraw from it. With feminine wit she sought, therefore, to reinforce the shrinking spirit through the medium of assured and worldly gowns.

On the night of the dinner Barbara dressed with the strange sensation of being launched into a world whose laws she would have to discover for herself. Her husband's knowledge of society was chiefly negative, as was her own. By breeding, by instinct, she knew what not to do. The tremendous task was to learn the positive social graces. She dreamed over this new problem, as in her childhood she had dreamed over the mystical meaning of Virgil.

When she looked in the mirror for a last survey of the new gown she began to understand the aid it should lend, when she had made it all her own. As yet it was something that the Emperor had put on her.

Her husband entered the room.

"Mr. Waring has kindly called for you, Barbara."

"Did you tell him why you couldn't go to the Faculty meeting?"

"Yes; and I told him also that he could have my vote. So many were absent last Friday that they took no vote."

"So you are still——"

"I'm still an effective unit."

Barbara hesitated.

"Did you tell him that I explained it to you?"

Dr. Penfold smiled.

"You've forgotten your husband once carried the hod. Such experiences make one a socialist."

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She reached for her cloak, and he folded it about her.

"Enjoy yourself. I cannot tell you, my dear, how glad I am to have some one represent me socially at Hallworth. For many years I seemed churlish, hidden behind my work."

"But I can't represent you as I should. I am not brilliant."

"Brilliant women are rather tiring, are they not, my dear?"

"That is comforting but not true, I'm afraid," she answered with a smile.

Waring, escorting a hooded and cloaked Barbara to the dinner, was unaware what manner of princess might appear in the drawing-room. She entered with a certain dignity born of her husband's last words, which had lifted a weight of self-consciousness from her. Representing him she could forget herself. Waring looked at her with the admiration which implies wonder. He could scarcely believe her responsible for the lovely gown she wore, at once subtle and simple; but his masculine mind accepted it, and her, gratefully without further speculation.

After she had greeted her hostess he found a seat for her. Her possibilities had never seemed so apparent to him, and he felt a keen pleasure in the fact that she had been given into his keeping; that to look out for her had become, by her husband's own wish, an obligation.

She thought of her first appearance in that beautiful room, a shy freshman in a childish gown. For the first time since her marriage the realization of her social po-

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sition and its prerogatives swept over her, appealed to her latent femininity, as something which might become a source of enjoyment. She put the thought away from her, however, as holding a meretricious element. Such enjoyment seemed scarcely compatible with sincerity of life.

The scene, with its profusion of flowers and lights, was a pretty one. The women of the dinner-giving set were nearly all present. Since her guest of honor was the President, Mrs. Maturin, putting her own preferences aside, had invited those whom she knew he liked, the good talkers among the men, the good listeners among the women, with irrepressible Mrs. Joyce to supply the element of audacity, without which the function might become hopelessly well-bred.

"You love beautiful things," Waring said. He had watched Barbara's eyes soften and deepen as she gazed about the room.

"Yes," she answered; then as his unspoken sympathy always brought the truth to her lips, she added: "But I should not want to live in a house like this."

"Why not?"

"I should love it too much—I should forget other things."

"Isn't that the medieval fear of beauty?"

"I should fear anything I loved too much," she said, half under her breath.

He smiled.

"Do you know how to dance?" he asked abruptly.

"No. I never had the chance to learn."

"You must ask Miss Dare or Miss King to teach you. They both dance well. Then you can go to the balls.

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All the Faculty Wife does. You will give me the pleasure of taking you to the First Assembly?"

"Perhaps, I am not sure," Barbara said frankly. She had the feeling she might lose her identity should she plunge too deeply into this rosy sea of pleasure.

Waring was amused at her sincerity, yet piqued and challenged by it. When would she learn to play the woman's part? The poise of her head, the clear glance of her eyes reminded him of a gallant boy. Even her marriage had not imprisoned her in her sex.

Mrs. Joyce approached them.

"I am envying you, Mrs. Penfold. Mr. Waring is to take you in. Now I've lost my last chance to quarrel with him until the next philanthropist gives a dinner!"

"Can you only quarrel with him at dinner?"

"It is the only occasion on which he can't get away."

"Mrs. Joyce is so sure of my devotion that she mocks me thus. She knows I'm her obedient slave."

Mrs. Joyce turned to Barbara.

"Never believe that a university man is your obedient slave. He is the slave of his specialty. I know if Herbert lost me he'd bear up. He could get another wife—but his library!——"

"We are adamant against such heresy!"

"Do you hear that? It means nothing. Mr. Waring when a freshman gave promise of something more than a literary devotion to romance. I can see him yet—a——"

"Oh, please spare me the picture of my cub period."

Barbara was conscious of resentment against this assured little lady, who assumed so much knowledge of a period closed to her.



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"I was a freshman once," she said. "We none of us like to be told of our crudities."

"I hope I did not imply that Mr. Waring was crude."

The words brought the color to Barbara's cheek like the cut of a lash. She realized that she had destroyed an airy fabric of before-dinner nothings with a clumsy serious speech.

Mrs. Joyce turned to Waring.

"I congratulate you on having a champion," she said, laughing. "Mrs. Penfold does not realize what old friends we are."

Her confidential tone shut her in with Waring as if she had closed a door suddenly against Barbara's face. The child in Barbara winked back its unseen tears, the woman in her rose to meet his kind, apologetic glance. She should not at least again commit the crime of being serious.

"Mr. Waring has so many friends," she said, "it is difficult to remember the different periods to which they belong." Then with a slightly satirical accent she added, "That I belong to a recent period is because I was a freshman myself year before last."

Mrs. Joyce did not like to be reminded of her seniority, but she smiled. She had no time for the fitting reply which contrary to rule did not come readily on this occasion. Professor Cartwright had approached to take her in. Leaving them she cast an amused glance at Waring, to which he did not respond. She bit her lip with vexation, wondering what he saw in Mrs. Penfold, who seemed to take life as seriously as some resurrected Puritan.



## THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING WORLDLY

As Waring gave his arm to Barbara he said: "Friendship is not measured by duration of time. I hope I may call you an old friend."

The tones of his voice vivified the platitude. She looked up at him gratefully, for she was telling herself that she had been both rude and clumsy. The glamor of the scene had suddenly faded, as a magician's structure at the crack of a whip. These well-dressed people, with their suave, misleading manners, could hurt you, if you were not on guard. Disillusionment, letting her down to a more normal plane, lent her a certain indifference to the entire affair. She could drill herself to be as cool as they were.

During the dinner Waring felt the change in her, and welcomed it as bringing her nearer to him. Barbara had always seemed a little exalted for every-day comfort, seeing things as she would like them rather than as they were. He wanted her to be enough of this world, to hold her own with such women as Mrs. Joyce, of whose airy manner and string of nothings he was suddenly contemptuous. She had had no business, he thought, to take Mrs. Penfold down so, and he found comfort in saying "cat" to himself.

Barbara's vision was now sufficiently cleared to see a little behind the scenes at this dinner-party. If Mrs. Joyce, whom she had always thought so spontaneously charming and friendly, could betray undreamed-of traits, the others might not be at all what they seemed, talking so politely together, as if the long wreaths of violets and Bon Silene roses encircling the table were but a symbol of their woven affections. Her destructive criticism stopped short at Mrs. Maturin and Waring. Of

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their essential kindness and goodness of heart she felt sure.

Her self-possession drew a certain amount of attention and interest to her during the dinner. Answering with some hesitation at first, she gained courage as the dinner progressed, becoming conscious after a time that Waring was doing all he could in a perfectly quiet way to draw her out, and support everything she said with his sympathy. She found herself relying on him, almost childishly confident because he was at her side—and understood. He could guide the most bewildered remark to its goal.

The President was, as usual, enjoying the conversation and the perfectly cooked food with impartiality, and saying little, even to Perdita, his right-hand neighbor; but suddenly he leaned forward and said gravely, though not without a gleam of humor in his keen eyes:

“Mrs. Penfold, what do you think of the cost of the higher education? Should it be low or high, inclusive or prohibitive?”

Waring turned slightly to Barbara, fearful lest she should venture her opinion among these experts. But the value of the negative was beginning to dawn on her.

“I do not think I am qualified to have an opinion.”

“But offhand what should you say?”

“I should think your point of view would be largely determined by your pocketbook,” she answered lightly.

The President laughed. Mrs. Joyce diverted his attention.

“Won’t you ask for our views on professors’ salaries?”

## THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING WORLDLY

“Madame, the aim of my life is to forget the tragical.”

Barbara turned to Waring.

“Should I have taken the President seriously?” she said, in a low voice.

“No, you did exactly right,” he answered. “It was a challenge. He cannot abide women with opinions.”

“It was a trap, then?”

“He was testing you, I think.”

Their community of understanding surrounded her now like a shield. She was glad she had not disappointed Waring in answering the President. She wished to show him that she could learn quickly, that any pains he took with her social education would be rewarded. This game called society was beginning to interest her. She said to herself she would learn to dance, learn to do as the others did—and then be unlike them. The egotism of solitary living was still strong upon her, and in the act of parting from some ideals of childhood she assured herself that being so wholly hers—she could call them back at will.

## CHAPTER XXV.

“YOUR SOUL WAS DANCING,”

BARBARA took her new pleasures, if not sadly, at least with a certain sense of duty. Left again with no domestic interest, save the obligation of companionship in the rare intervals of her husband's leisure, circumstances seemed forcing her more and more into the social life of Hallworth. The blunder of her marriage was as yet too imperfectly understood by her to admit of her facing it without fear. Nor could the full significance of marriage itself appear to a nature in which the primitive emotion was still dormant. Barbara, to escape her confusions and to please her husband, gave her energies to society in the spirit of the learner.

True to Dr. Penfold's prophecy, Hallworth accepted his wife's solitary participation in its social life as a matter of course. To the Faculty circle the learned mathematician had never ceased to be a bachelor recluse. That a lady bearing his name should be seen at dinners and receptions was a fact perhaps whimsical in its origins, but once accepted troubled no one further. Besides Barbara's was not an isolated case, learned husbands at Hallworth being notoriously averse to following too closely the social round. It was on record that the one faint gleam of humor which had ever crossed Mrs. Leonard's plaintive mind was when she threatened to name the "History of Russia" as co-respondent in divorce proceedings against her husband.

## “YOUR SOUL WAS DANCING”

Waring found himself becoming deeply interested in Barbara's social success, in watching the slow unfolding, leaf by leaf, of the white rose of her character. He had to admit she was not brilliant in the sense of always being gracefully ready like Perdita with a clever or witty remark. But she had the distinction lent by difference. Her face, despite the experiences of the past two years, still recalled an unusual childhood. Waring thrilled with pleasure when any one said a word in praise of her. He did not know how much he longed that she should be appreciated.

His looking out for Mrs. Penfold provoked no criticism. Waring's gallantry was well known as belonging to the general order. The courtesy of his manners held almost a foreign flavor. Some of the men in the University did not dare to be chivalrous lest they should be misunderstood. Waring never made excursions into the land of chivalry. He dwelt there the year round. Life was gray at best. To create purple and gold was entirely legitimate provided one never forgot the hard granite underneath. He sometimes longed for romance with all the hopelessness of a keen, nonchalant mind doomed inevitably to see through emotions, even when in the grip of them. At the task of falling in love he had worked harder and more conscientiously than most men, but had never succeeded in reaching the marriage notch. The romance of his senior year had come to nothing, because he wondered in spite of himself if the girl would eventually grow fat like her dowager mother, chaperoning them both at a dance, and looking in her green velvet like a newly upholstered armchair.

The kind of knight-errantry which attendance upon



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Barbara called for exactly suited Waring, in whose nature medieval elements were not lacking. Aside from the satisfaction of the dramatic instinct, his friendship for her was genuine—so far the most real of his many friendships with women.

She herself began by thinking that she must be a burden to him, his responsibility being greater than if she were experienced, knowing thoroughly well how to play her own part. She was sometimes conscious, as at Mrs. Maturin's dinner, that he played his and hers, too, to save her what he could. The desire to stand as much as possible on her own feet, to get rid of miserable shyness, of self-consciousness and other burdens of the sensitive novice led her to work as hard as she used to over her Greek. Mrs. Maturin, the Emperor, and those who were friendly enough to her to take particular notice of her, saw that she was never once relaxed at these social functions. Her very self-possession seemed less the result of her being at ease than of her being at attention. The Emperor sometimes wondered when, the preliminary martyrdom over, Barbara would begin to enjoy herself. Having watched her through her freshman year, she realized more keenly than Mrs. Maturin that a nature essentially solitary was making an heroic effort to be social. That the process actually caused suffering she did not doubt.

Barbara had come to her and asked to be taught to dance. She willingly took her in hand, though fearing it might be a difficult process. In this she was disappointed. Her pupil's sense of rhythm and sensitiveness to music she found were keen. Every day in the gloaming hour Elizabeth pounded out waltzes and two-steps

## “YOUR SOUL WAS DANCING”

on the gymnasium piano, while the Emperor guided Barbara around and around the room. Sometimes Mrs. Penfold remained to supper afterward, taking more pleasure and interest in the Hall surroundings than she ever had done in her freshman days.

By the time of the First Assembly Barbara was willing to accept the Emperor's verdict that she danced well enough to appear on the floor. The latter had planned her a little dancing-gown of rose-colored chiffon trimmed with tiny rosebuds. Barbara sighed over it when she saw it, but a moment afterward she put away the thought, with some other thoughts and emotions now out of service—her desire to help her husband, the ideal of her little child, her homesickness for a ghostly, vanished home.

She tried to induce her husband to go the ball, but he was sweetly and mildly stubborn.

“My dear, I dislike music. I dislike disjointed conversation. I am afraid of draughts. Salads and ices do not agree with me. But your youth will protect you. Go and enjoy yourself.”

“I wish I were a mathematician,” Barbara answered. “Then I'd stay home and work with you.”

Her husband patted her cheek.

“You are better off dancing.” He had been too glad of her interest these weeks in the social life of Hallworth to wish her back as a negative factor in his house.

The Assembly was held in the Armory. The most formal of the Faculty social functions, it brought together not only the Faculty but eligible townsfolk, visitors from other places, and lastly favored students, with

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perhaps the senior class president and some picked men from the exclusive fraternities. The decorations were always in the University colors, carried out in flowers and bunting, but in consideration of complexions the colored lights were yellow.

Into this world of white and green Waring ushered Barbara, looking young in her pink gown with pink ribbons in her dark hair, holding in place some rosebuds.

"Here is your dance-card."

"My first dance-card!"

She turned the pretty trifle about in her hands, then read over the names.

"Must I dance with all these men?"

"I am afraid you must. I have put myself down for four waltzes. I did not dare take more, lest I should be accused of selfishness."

"I should have absolved you," she said.

She was learning to speak their speech, light as thistle-down, meaning nothing. She sometimes wondered what they did say when they were really in earnest.

They passed the line of receiving women, among whom was Perdita.

"I wonder why Miss Ravenel never married," Barbara said.

"She is too many women to marry one man," Waring replied. "Ah, there is Miss Dare. She and I have been at swords-point since the tuition measure went through. I want to fight openly for its repeal; she, woman-like, would be diplomatic."

"Are the students much aroused over it?"

"There is a great deal of unorganized grumbling."

## “YOUR SOUL WAS DANCING”

“Are you talking shop to Mrs. Penfold?” the Emperor said, approaching them, her eyes scornful. “Please don’t. She must really enjoy herself to-night—not pretend to.”

“I am tired of your imperial ways. You must waltz with me. Your card, please.”

He reached for her card, and she gave it to him unsmiling. He wrote his name in three places.

The music of a Strauss waltz, luring, dreamy, suggestive of waving, beautiful lines, stole through the ball-room. Waring turned to Barbara for this his first waltz with her. To dance with a saint, an idealist, how much more piquant—should she prove a good dancer!—than with fluff and feathers. In another moment they were upon the floor. The passivity, the yielding to direction, which was so much her mood when with Waring, stood her in good service now. The music called at her ears like a soul in eager bliss. She wished that it might go on forever. Of his close presence she was scarcely aware. Once he whispered, “You are not tired?”

“Ah, no.”

It came to an end at last, and she was back in reality; but this time a reality of lights and flowers. Youth itself swept toward her like the scent of May blossoms on spring winds. She lifted an eager, happy face to Waring’s.

“Do I do well?”

He caught his breath, with sudden rapture of her childlike trust. He weighed his words lest “dear” should be among them.

“You did perfectly. I think your soul was dancing.”



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Her eyes opened wide with delight.

"I think so too. I am so glad I learned! What if——" her face fell. "What if I had never known what I missed—now if I should never dance again I should at least know."

"May I put down my name again?"

"Indeed, yes."

"And again?"

"Indeed, yes."

"Six times—six waltzes. Here is some one to claim you for the two-step."

Barbara transferred herself reluctantly. This new man looked shy and haughty, and in her own happy mood shyness was incomprehensible. All the world danced in rose-light.

The practical two-step music sounded harsh after the waltz. Her partner clutching her gave her the sensation of being dragged by a desperate man. But if desperate he was also heroic. He did not relinquish his hold on her until the music ceased. Then he dropped her into the nearest chair, said "Thanks" and disappeared. Barbara, breathless, was wondering at his abrupt leave of her, when he returned with lemonade. He watched her drink it, saying not a word, then took the glass and was off again.

She was smiling over this pantomime when Dutton came for the next dance. He was still roseate from the pleasure of a waltz with Allaire.

"I'm so glad you're dancing, Mrs. Penfold! It's a pleasure to us all."

"Can you tell me who my partner was?"

"Oh, that was Jenks, the biggest Grecian in the



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senior class. Last year he took Phi Beta Kappa, and he's back for a doctorate, but he can't dance. I guess you found that out."

"I thought it was myself, perhaps."

"No, indeed. Jenks is noted for his bad dancing. I don't know why Richard let him get on your card except that he belongs to his fraternity. This is our waltz."

Dutton was a conscientious dancer; but he came not at all under the spell of the music, and Barbara herself remained outside of it. She was impatient for her next dance with Waring.

When the waltz was finished Dutton led her to a group of women, which included Perdita and Allaire. Allaire took her hand.

"You are getting very pretty," she said, in her quiet, audacious way. "I think you're beginning to like Hallworth."

"I know I like to dance—and I've just begun. Think of the arrears to make up!"

"You dance as if you liked it," Perdita said. She had been watching Barbara and Waring, and thinking that they danced as gracefully together as two lovers.

The evening ended with another waltz. Then they went out under the stars. Barbara was dreamily happy, too happy even to know why. For once she asked herself no questions.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### DR. PENFOLD RISES TO THE OCCASION.

BARBARA and her husband were seated at the breakfast-table, in the cheeriness of winter morning sunshine. Dr. Penfold, who like all healthy persons felt his brightest and best in the early hours, was munching toast and enjoying the aroma of his coffee. A wood fire made pleasant sounds on the hearth. Barbara felt that the time was propitious to broach the subject on her mind.

Since the Assembly a month had elapsed; to her, a novice, the gayest month she had ever known; a confused medley of flowers, music, tea-cups, chiffon, dance-favors and small-talk, in which the fact of her enjoyment of it all alone stood out distinctly. Her first dance had served as a key to open an unsuspected chamber of her spirit, in whose warmth and cheer she could forget certain lonely perspectives. Her sudden abandonment to pleasure had surprised even Waring. Yet he was thankful. It not only became her, but was a delicate tribute to his good offices.

"Amos, did you ever give a dinner? A large one, I mean."

"Never, my dear."

"Would you mind if I gave one? We are in debt to a good many people."

Her husband considered her question.

"My dear," he said anxiously, "do you think Mehitabel would be willing?"

## DR. PENFOLD RISES TO THE OCCASION

"I am quite sure she wouldn't," Barbara said, smiling. "But couldn't we have a caterer? She'd be amenable if she thought we had the caterer to help her. He could bring one experienced waiter."

Dr. Penfold knit his brows. He saw not one waiter but a whole procession invading the scholastic quiet of his house. He had reached the stage of distrust and doubt which made the locking up of the family spoons imperative when Barbara came to his relief.

"It needn't be a dinner, but it ought to be something."

"Must it be something, my dear?"

"I am afraid so. You see, you can't go about without doing something for people in return."

"That's true," Dr. Penfold said, the dismal logic of the statement gripping him. Retributive ghosts stood at his elbow. For his own peace of mind he had deliberately thrust Barbara into the social life of Hallworth, and now she was returning to him with a multitude at her heels. He was of a hospitable nature provided his guests did not come in droves, and would remember always that by the iron law of necessity he was a mathematician before he was a host.

A sudden inspiration seized him. A dinner to his unenlightened mind implied a maximum of trouble to a minimum of cancelled obligations. Why not do it all up at once, have a perfect holocaust of guests at one fell reception?

"My dear," he said, "why not give a reception?"

"But the house is too small."

The argument seemed unanswerable. Dr. Penfold handed his cup across the table, looking apologetic.

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"We might build an extension. My dear, if we had one dinner, would it bring forth another?"

"I am afraid so," Barbara said truthfully. "I could only have ten guests at a time, and I am in debt to a good many."

"But dinners are expensive, are they not? One must offer good wines. The President told me he was nearly poisoned by the McDonalds' sherry."

She blushed.

"Amos, dear, you know I want always to use my own money for—for things like this."

"But that isn't fair."

"But if I wish it?" she said, smiling.

Dr. Penfold stirred his coffee thoughtfully.

"The Joyces have had receptions and their house is smaller than ours."

He pondered for a moment and then made a desperate plunge.

"Why not have three receptions, my dear?—be at home on three different dates?"

The idea of the dinners was dying hard in Barbara. With the enthusiasm of the novice she was fired with ambition to play the role of hostess in its most difficult form.

"You mean divide it up. Even then it would be crowded."

Dr. Penfold hesitated, then like a man intoxicated with self-denial took the last plunge.

"The study is the largest room in the house. The men could smoke there."

Barbara clapped her hands.

"You'd really give me the study?"

## DR. PENFOLD RISES TO THE OCCASION

“Yes. I could lock up my papers. You could even have a table or two for whist.”

The proposition was taking on magic tints. The Emperor would help her with a cosy corner in the hall. By this time the little drawing-room had already stretched several feet. The guests were still crowded, but she would give them good things to eat. Her short experience in Hallworth society had taught her that there was nothing like delicious coffee and irreproachable salads to soothe the outraged feelings of guests, after half an hour of stepping on and being stepped on.

“Very well, then. We’ll be at home in January.”

“Yes, as soon as possible. I have been keeping my publishers at bay for the last six weeks as it is.”

A week later the University received cards, informing it that Dr. and Mrs. Penfold would be at home on certain evenings in January. When it recovered from its astonishment, it said that it certainly must have been a love-match after all.

Barbara, having sent her invitations, was seized with stage-fright, plagued with spectral “what-ifs.” In despair she sent word to Waring and the Emperor to come together to her the first evening they could spare. Both having luck, they came that same night.

“Why this mad summons?” the Emperor said, as Barbara greeted her. “Mr. Waring and I are feverish with anxiety. I assure you that to come he left off writing an editorial which may lose him his place at the University.”

“I am glad I sent for him, then. It is just this, my dear friends, I have rashly become a hostess.”



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"I see you have," Waring said, "and we're dying to be guests."

"And now I am frightened, and I want you both to promise me solemnly you'll come to all three functions and help me save the day."

The Emperor thought her jesting, but Waring's intuitions, sharpened by his growing friendship with her, read real anxiety in her eyes. That she should send for him, appeal to him, touched a deeper chord of feeling than he should have liked to admit to himself.

"You know, Barbara, we belong to the Order of Friendship, each of us, though we don't tell every one," the Emperor said. "Of course we'll come and perform any tricks you'd like."

"It's the beforehand tricks that worry me."

"I see," Waring said. "You want to plan decorations; food for clamoring guests—all the little engaging details."

"Let's begin with the drawing-room," the Emperor said.

"Of course I would change nothing here," Barbara answered quickly. "I should only put flowers about and shaded candles."

Waring smiled. Barbara's almost reverential desire for the preservation of her husband's stiff little house in its original bachelor state pleased him, yet seemed to him a revelation of the essential duality of the union.

"What color?"

"Red for the first evening?"

"Wicked red or good red?" said the Emperor. "Jacques or American Beauties?"

## DR. PENFOLD RISES TO THE OCCASION

"I couldn't afford American Beauties. Are Jacques wicked red?"

"Not exactly wicked—but they're not ready to be canonized, like some white roses you see."

Waring laughed.

"You have a bizarre mind, my Emperor."

"I am not your Emperor. Don't be impertinent because I write better editorials than you do."

Barbara rose and shut the parlor door.

"I'm afraid our talking may disturb Dr. Penfold."

"Now about things to eat," Waring said. "Please don't have lobster salad unless you can get fresh lobsters. I assure you the whole chemistry department was poisoned one year at Mrs. Leonard's, though people did say Leonard put something evil in the salad dressing, he was so cross because his wife had company."

"No; I shall have chicken salad."

They squabbled amiably over the ices, but arrived at last in a paradise of perfect arrangements, and having persuaded Barbara that she might make a passable hostess, as high an ambition as she dared aspire to, they left her with the promise of another session before the first event came off.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE REVELATION OF PAIN.

ON the night of Barbara's reception Waring went first to call on the President in response to a note requesting him to do so. He knew why Dr. Hunt wished to see him. Ever since the adoption of the measure doubling the tuition fees he had with deliberate and perfectly conscious recklessness published editorials in *College and State* setting forth the unwisdom of the act, and predicting its eventual repeal. That the students would take these editorials seriously he was sure. Their interests were at stake. On their united strength he counted to win eventually.

The servant ushered him into Dr. Hunt's library. The President was dressing, he said, but would be down in a few moments. Waring settled himself in an arm-chair, glad of an opportunity to look about this grave room, its air haunted with ghosts of innumerable fine cigars, and perfumed delicately by the bindings of the Doctor's favorite classics. A Horace lay among the papers on the desk, its dull green leather powdered all over with gold dust. The book-plate bore the President's coat-of-arms. Waring smiled over this stately vanity.

He rose to examine some shelves of books, picking up a bronze candelabrum for better light from the tall wax candles. In the semi-obscurity he stumbled over a huge mastiff, which rose with an amiable yap of apology.

## THE REVELATION OF PAIN

The Doctor's Aldines were famous. He was examining one when the President entered.

He smiled with engaging frankness when he saw what was in Waring's hand.

"Now you know why I never married. I could not afford a wife and rare editions too."

"Why marry?" Waring said lightly, himself intoxicated for the moment with rarity. "Here is embodied romance. This is dainty enough to have come from the boudoir of one of Titian's women."

"I'm afraid they didn't read Greek, those golden ladies; but it does have the odor of the Renascence. Will you smoke?"

"Thank you, no. I am going on to Mrs. Penfold's reception."

The President settled himself comfortably by the fire and puffed away in silence for a few moments. Then he said: "Mr. Waring, your editorials on the tuition question have interested me greatly, but I am afraid you are fighting for a lost cause. Why not devote the space to other matters more hopeful?"

His intonation was dry, satirical, but not unkindly.

"I do not consider it a lost cause, Dr. Hunt. I still hope that the measure will be reconsidered and annulled or modified."

"It will not be."

His voice, final, cool, indifferent, made Waring suddenly conscious of being young. He rose and leaned one arm on the mantelpiece, looking down into the fire with troubled, boyish eyes. The President, watching him, thought he was almost too handsome and too full of vitality to be formed into a college professor. He was not

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at all sure that this man might not eventually find Hallworth a deep but narrow cup for his ambitions. Meanwhile they could effervesce in *College and State*. Waring's boldness in opposing him pleased Dr. Hunt, who had a savage hatred of sycophancy; but he wished the younger man to understand from the first that such opposition was hopeless. Understanding this thoroughly, he was at liberty to tilt as much as he wished in his clever magazine.

"I think, sir, you can hardly say of any measure that it is final. The personal equation might be withdrawn. The University endowment fund might swell to such a degree that it could afford to pay students for learning."

"God forbid! The coaxing system is already too well developed. Can't you see, my dear fellow, that the cheapness of education is responsible for half the rawness in the American character? I could name as perfect examples two or three politicians, graduates of bastard colleges, specious, clever, unreasonable men—of no culture and—of no principle."

"But Hallworth is of legitimate birth. We are as solid as Harvard in principles of scholarship."

"Yes; and we shall be more solid the higher we value our services."

"That is not a democratic ideal," Waring said.

"Democracy is driving this country into imperialism. England is more democratic this hour than we are. We need the corrective of aristocratic standards—understand me, not plutocratic."

"Your aristocrat is often poor. He finds the great university closed to him on that account; must go to a bastard college or not at all. Is that right?"



## THE REVELATION OF PAIN

Dr. Hunt smiled, fingering the ears of the mastiff by his knee. "For one aristocrat we exclude ten of our American idol, the People."

"Have they no business at a university?" Waring said, frowning a little.

"Oh, yes, some of them; those clever enough to distinguish themselves in a profession—or those dull enough to be merely—gentlemen."

Waring smiled. Then he felt in his pocket for a letter received that morning, which had caused him as much pleasure as if it had announced a fortune. Though he had no intention of accepting this call to another university, he was conscious of a boyish desire that the President should know of its reception. The university in question was distinguished for its conservatism and high standard of scholarship. To be called by it implied that certain spurs had been already won. Waring knew that his one year as assistant professor of mathematics could not have counted for him. The honor was due to the magazine. This made him the more anxious that Hunt should know. He handed it to the President without a word.

Hunt read it through and returned it to him.

"Will you accept?" he said, careful to keep bias out of his voice. He did not wish to lose Waring, but still less did he wish to have him know it.

"No."

"Hallworth still contents you?"

Waring winced, as a man accused of infidelity to the love of his life.

"Hallworth is my Alma Mater. Naturally I prefer her to all other universities."

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He was conscious of the speech sounding sophomoric, but Dr. Hunt's smile was not critical.

"You are late," Barbara said, as he greeted her. She was standing by her husband at the door of the little drawing-room, already crowded. Waring thought she looked very lovely in her simple white dress, with its sash of brilliant red, matching the roses she carried.

"I was detained by the President. I am so sorry."

"Do you know whether he is coming this evening?"

"I think not—and you, Dr. Penfold?" he added, turning to his host with a gleam of mischief in his eyes, "the University should canonize you for this sacrifice!"

"My dear boy, only inexorable logic brought me to it. But now that it is upon me I am thoroughly enjoying myself."

"Is Miss Dare here?" Waring asked Barbara.

"She is pouring coffee. Elizabeth has the chocolate. Don't you want to take some one out?"

"If you will promise me the pleasure of taking you later."

"Indeed, yes!"

She turned to greet Mrs. Joyce, who had evidently overheard their last words. She looked gaily from one to the other.

"Dear Petrarch, when will you begin to publish sonnets in *College and State*? Or is it too serious an organ for such dainty trifles?"

Waring to his disgust felt himself flush at the implication.

"One must have a Laura," he said lightly, "to whom to write sonnets. I am not so fortunate." He was be-

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ginning to find Mrs. Joyce's audacity rudeness. Since the night of her tilt with Barbara he had not called on her, and her delicate malice was asking why.

"Mr. Waring, I fear, is not a poet," Barbara said, smiling, but with a dignity that seemed to Waring to clothe her all at once in flowing matronly garments. He avoided her eyes as he said, with sudden wish to mystify Mrs. Joyce:

"No; but I should like to be."

"Nothing easier—fall in love," said the little lady.

"I have a hundred times—and remained mute."

"Take me to the dining-room. Mrs. Penfold, you'll forgive this outrageous haste, but Herbert and I dined on bread and cheese. The pipes froze this morning, and the only available plumber buried his mother-in-law this afternoon."

Barbara nodded and smiled; but as Mrs. Joyce went away, clinging to Waring like a little gilded burr, she was conscious of a vague sense of resentment against this woman, whose velvety eyes sometimes revealed the rapier. Why should she single her out for thrusts? Involuntarily she moved a little closer to her husband.

Perdita passed her and put her hand lightly in Barbara's for a moment. Since the night of the fairy-tale a certain affection had existed between them, built on the foundation of the unspoken.

"As a privileged character I am going to remain a while. Three whist fiends have asked me to join them up-stairs."

"Oh, please stay and be as happy as you can," Barbara said. "I hope our guests are not wishing we had built an extension."

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"Your hospitality has expanded the walls. And I'm sure the scene in the dining-room would appeal to your hostess-heart. You've put every one in a heavenly humor. Dr. Leonard even asked his wife if he should bring her another ice."

Barbara laughed.

"I'm glad they are happy!"

She was beginning herself to relax under the growing impression that things were moving well. Dr. Penfold was talking with the astronomer of Hallworth, and she turned away, mingling with those guests still in the drawing-room. A familiar voice speaking her name drew her to the corner where Allaire sat with Dutton.

"Stop being great lady and play with us a minute," Allaire said quaintly. Barbara seated herself beside her, but in the same moment Mrs. Sordello beckoned her daughter from across the room, and Allaire rose with reluctance. Her mother, still haunted by the vision of a college president, was always uneasy when Allaire looked too happy.

"Did Richard tell you he's been called to Merion University?" Dutton said.

Barbara gazed at him blankly for a moment, then she said slowly and with an effort:

"No, he didn't tell me."

"The letter only came this morning. It's a great honor—a full professorship!"

The roses slipped from Barbara's hand to the floor. Some misery which she could not, dare not understand suddenly weighed on her like a thick, stifling cloud.

"Will he accept?"

"I think it likely," Dutton said, still smiling over



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his news. "Waring certainly has the trick of rising—but it's more than luck," he added loyally. "That magazine of his has attracted a great deal of attention."

"Yes, it is very clever," Barbara said, in a dull voice. She was sitting up straight and stiff now, her eyes wide and dark in the sudden pallor of her face.

Dutton, unconscious of the effect his words had had upon her, talked on of Waring, and, becoming reminiscent, recounted the circumstances of their first meeting on a memorable October evening in their freshman year, and sundry college adventures shared in common. Barbara listened with a pain in her breast which bewildered her, oppressed her.

"He has a genius for friendship," Dutton was saying. "If he should accept I should miss him dreadfully; but I would not be selfish enough to wish to keep him. He'd have a full professorship there."

Barbara nodded. A genius for friendship! Yes! She and Waring were friends indeed, such good friends that the thought of Hallworth without him hurt her before she was aware. He had asked her once to look upon him as an old friend. Even if he did go, might she not think of him in that way, find consolation in that?

"I am come to claim you, Mrs. Penfold."

She raised her face, white with its intensity of feeling, to his, as glad to hear his voice as if he had come back from the dead. In her imagination he had already left Hallworth. She rose at once, excusing herself to Mr. Dutton. As they went in he asked her if she were tired. Smiling up into his face, she said "No." She would not be less generous than Dutton.

The momentary gladness which the sight of him had



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quickened was lost again in a sea of confused feeling. She waited until he was seated beside her, then, forcing herself to look happy, she said:

“Mr. Dutton has told me about Merion. I congratulate you.”

“It was gratifying. I am glad of it for just that. But I’m not going to accept.”

“You are not going to accept?”

Some tremor in her voice drew his eyes to hers. They gazed at him frankly, but the joy in them enveloped him, covered him with glory. His heart leaped in sudden, tender, fearful exultation. Barbara was glad that he was staying, and with her beautiful sincerity showing it in her eyes, her tones, her look. In that instant of wonder all his dreams swept past him, a confused golden mist, through which he saw her joyful face.

“No, I shall not accept,” he heard himself saying.

“I am very glad. We—Hallworth could not spare you.”

“And I love—Hallworth too well to leave it. I’d rather be second or third here than first anywhere else.”

He spoke with sudden enthusiasm, as if the realization of what it would mean to leave Hallworth broke upon him.

Then they talked like two light-hearted children. Barbara did not stop to analyze her joy.

The evening ended gaily and informally by a gathering up-stairs in the study of the nearer friends after the other guests had taken their departure. Perdita, watching Barbara, and noting her quiet content, with its undercurrent of happy feeling that betrayed itself at times in a word or look, thought that no prophecy of dis-

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aster could be safely made of any marriage, however strange. This marriage was evidently turning out well. She was deeply thankful for Barbara's sake.

But when the last guests were gone Barbara had a sense of dissatisfaction with herself.

"Are you very tired, dear?" she said to her husband, in a tone that seemed not only concerned but regretful.

"I am tired, yes, but I enjoyed the evening. Everybody was very pleasant. I think, my dear, your party was a success."

Barbara sighed.

"I am glad it was, but I'm almost sorry there are two more."

Dr. Penfold looked surprised.

"Why, my dear? Didn't you enjoy yourself?"

"Oh, yes; but I think I've been too frivolous. I feel now like studying and working hard, and—and being sensible!"

Her husband smiled. He had heard that women were strange and variable; but he scarcely credited Barbara with so much femininity.

"Do not be afraid to live. I can't do it myself, but you are young—and a woman!"

"Do not be afraid to live," she repeated, as if pondering upon his words.

He thought her tired; but the next morning her mood was still upon her. She came down to breakfast in a straight little penitential gown of black, a dress of her freshman year.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

“HE THAT SEEKS TO SAVE HIS LIFE SHALL LOSE IT.”

“AND it is next Sunday that you are to preach before the University?”

Mrs. Maturin and Perceval were standing in one of the alcoves of the historical library. Meeting there by chance, she had detained him on one pretext and another. He had avoided her of late, and she had no desire to lose as a friend the man whom she would not recognize as a lover. To turn a lover into a friend was a task she thought requiring greater powers of enchantment than the reverse process. To awaken emotion was a comparatively simple art; to eternalize it you must use all the resources of your spirit.

“Yes; it is the date they usually give me.”

“Will you preach to the Faculty or to the young things?”

Perceval smiled.

“I’m afraid I’ve not enough fervor of spirit just now to preach acceptably to the young things. I shall preach to the Faculty.”

“Have you chosen your text?”

“‘He that seeks to save his life shall lose it.’”

“Do you believe that?”

“Sometimes.”

With her he could be absolutely sincere. It was the one expression of his love which he allowed himself.

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She looked at the high-bred, reserved face, with its marks of suffering, and the thought crossed her mind that suffering, not faith, had sent Perceval into the priesthood. His peculiar gift for understanding every form of pain stood him in the place of spiritual illumination.

“Mr. Perceval.”

“Yes.”

“Are you a believer?”

“Intermittently.”

“And between believing?”

“I work like a horse at my chosen profession of doing good.”

The faint satire in his voice revealed self-mockery. Something rose in her and protested.

“Is it a little thing to have youth come to you, trust you?”

His face softened.

“Bright, brave children! They make one feel tarnished, and old without being wise.”

“Preach to them next Sunday—not to the old and cowardly children.”

She spoke lightly, but her earnest eyes searching his face told of the depth of her belief in him. Could he not be thankful for that, or must he, ingrate, clamor for the personal? This woman enshrined with a dead love, yet not withdrawing from the world—he would have her give the lie to her past for the sake of his own passion!

He excused himself after a few moments and went to make a parochial call which would take him out into the country. As he swung along the forest road he delib-

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erately faced the hopelessness of his situation. He doubted whether she would ever love any man again, but he knew that she would never love him. He saw it in the clear pity of her glance, in her ill-concealed effort to put him right with herself on the solid ground of friendship. What was to be done?

He asked himself if her own point of view, so mystically beautiful and unusual, was a sane and healthy one. Could she go on loving the dead, keeping her innermost life for the dead, without eventually becoming morbid? This existence at Hallworth, however bravely she went through the social round, was essentially a preoccupation with memories. His criticism of her conduct brought him back again to the plane of hope. After all love might be born out of the very calmness of her friendship for him. Greater miracles had happened, and Perceval, in this matter concerning himself, became suddenly a believer in miracles.

Barbara heard with pleasure the news that Perceval was to preach before the University, as since her marriage she had had no opportunity to hear him. Dr. Penfold, although a man who concerned himself not at all with religious matters, finding, as he said, a sufficient outlet for his emotions in hard work, was in his place every Sunday morning in the University chapel.

Whether this attendance was atavistic or in recognition of an official duty Barbara had never been able to discover. Whatever its cause, Dr. Penfold seemed to derive a certain amount of pleasure from it, as he listened with calm impartiality to every variety of doctrine. It was a tradition among the students that the



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mathematician, bridging the centuries, was a disciple of Pythagoras, and his creed a numerical table.

Concerning those tremendous problems of the universe, which since her childhood had haunted Barbara like obscure passions, she had learned not to speak to her husband. Educated by her uncle along philosophical rather than religious lines, she had by no means acquired the philosophic mind. Religion, like dancing, having been denied to her emotional youth, she sometimes longed for the luxury of it. Since the night of her first reception she had had a dim desire for some guiding principle in the labyrinthine ways to which the straight path of her childhood had led. She wondered what Waring believed. She thought that she would ask him some day. They were such good friends now she could ask him anything. Those few moments of bitter pain at the news of his going she would not even let herself recall, since the pain held also bewilderment.

The chapel on Sunday morning, the one day in the week when services were held there, was filled to the doors with students, present from every variety of motive. What churchliness the place possessed was found in the Gothic windows, many of them memorial, from which enhaloed saints looked down in gentle wonder upon a modern university. The walls were covered with bronze and marble tablets setting forth the virtues and scholastic achievements of departed servants of Hallworth. On one side opened a mortuary chapel, where in marble was carved the effigy of the founder; clothed in the academic gown, the deeds of the University in his hand. Thus enwreathed in stately Latin sen-

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tences, and covered with the mantle of a scholarship he had never known, a good man of the people slept.

No altar was under the east window, but a platform with chairs and reading-desk. At that desk ministers and priests from every denomination had set forth their peculiar conceptions of the universe and man's place in it. The University listened gravely and attentively, and sometimes sighed and sometimes smiled to itself.

Perceval, facing the small but select and concentrated congregation, wondered in what words he should address this peculiar body, the keen thinkers and profound scholars of the Faculty, the bold and careless thinkers among the students, biased by their youth. Then the impulse seized him to speak to himself and not to them.

He announced his text. Then pausing for a moment, he began to speak of happiness, of the various conceptions of what constituted happiness, from the crude notions of the savage to the doctrine of a Plato, or an Aristippus; from the stoicism of a Roman Emperor to the ecstasy of a vision-haunted hermit.

“But, after all, we are not concerned with their conceptions of happiness. The Roman Empire as a fact, if not as an ideal, has passed away, and with it its peculiar setting. The fair Athens in which the philosophers walked is a dream. The aspirations of the Middle Ages are no longer felt by the modern world. You young men and women, however you may wander into that dream-world, peopled with stately shades, are concerned primarily with the here and now. What will bring you lasting happiness? Are the quiet joys of the scholar more enduring than youthful dreams and youthful love?

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No; they shall both be laid away at last in gray chambers. The fiery blossom, the page heavy with its Greek, both decay; though the process be short with one, long with the other. Your sweet friendship of to-day is to-morrow one with the dead violets. Your honors are less lasting than the ivy devouring the solid wall. ‘Even the holy house shall crumble,’ Lytton writes.

“If the bliss of living be denied us, what of the bliss of dying? If it be forbidden to us to be in love with life, what if we should be in love with death, as a surer conservator of energy! What if with St. Paul we should cry, ‘I die daily,’ as the only terms upon which we could really secure life! What is this dying daily? this laying down of life, to gain life—this renunciation of happiness for the sake of some far-off immortal bliss? I do not know what it is, but I know the power of its workings. The sweetness of rejection may be felt even by a child creeping to its parent’s arms at last after a day of play. The strenuous scholar, sacrificing himself to gain his object; the soldier, fearful lest death should pass him by as one unworthy of such high honor; the mother, giving up all things for the child; do these not know the bliss of dying? Are they not powerful in the world’s economy? So I say unto you, die. But I say, also, do not anticipate the act of dying. Go on with your work, your play, your love, your life, cheerily, heartily, but with that reverence in your heart for the highest, which, when at last in some crisis you meet life and death, will show you the true life, the true death, and cause you to be willing to encounter darkness as a bride rather than live unworthily. This is the lesson of the Crucifix, of One who, regard Him as you will,

## THE LAW OF LIFE

Son of God or Son of Man, knew to the uttermost the joy of dying. This joy no man takes from you."

Waring was waiting on the chapel steps as Barbara came out. "Won't you go for a walk? It is early."

She turned to him a face translucent with feeling.

"No; you look critical. And I couldn't bear to have a disparaging word now."

But she knew that she would go with him, and he knew it, drawing her with the appeal of his eyes.

"Bring Mr. Waring back to dinner," Dr. Penfold said. "An old student in New York, Richard, who deserves to be canonized for the act, has sent me a box of extravagant cigars."

Waring laughed, turning away with Barbara, who seemed absorbed in her thoughts. He carefully avoided any allusion to the sermon, and pointedly drew the conversation in an antipodal direction.

But his companion did not respond. Having tacitly forbidden him to speak of the sermon, she was now resenting his silence, as more critical than speech. Suddenly she interrupted his leisurely account of the crew's plans for the next boat-race.

"You did not like that sermon?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"I am too much of a Greek in my sympathies to believe in the creed of dying. Besides it was mystical, and I do not like mysticism. It implies a kind of mental laziness."

"But you wouldn't say that Mr. Perceval has a lazy mind."



## "HE THAT SEEKS TO SAVE HIS LIFE"

"Oh, no! It was only his mood this morning."

Barbara looked distressed.

"Only his mood? But it rang true!"

"Mood or principle, I don't think it a true conception of life," Waring said, smiling a little as he looked into her upturned wistful face.

"Come into the Museum of Casts a minute. The janitor is there this morning and will let us in."

"Why do you want to go in there?" Barbara said.

"To show you why the Greek ideal appeals to me most."

They went together into the great hall, against the dull green walls of which white, immortal forms stood in divine calm. Barbara, gazing up at the still faces, thought that the tortured figure on the Cross was at least nearer to human experience, and said so.

"But isn't this calm, this perfect harmony of soul and body, a higher ideal to live for?" Waring said, less from the depths of conviction than the desire to see the light kindle in her eyes.

Barbara shook her head.

"Of course, I'm dreadfully ignorant; but it does seem to me that to look like that, to bear oneself like that, one would have to be heartless."

They were standing before the Venus of Melos, a cast in heroic size. The statue, placed so that the face seemed gazing down the long stretches of the lake, filled Waring, as always, with the sense of a peace incapable of being broken by any sickness of the soul. He looked from the triumphant figure to the woman at his side, her modern, sensitive face betraying its longing for joy,



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for certainty, in conflict with its consciousness of the twilights of the world.

“Not heartless, only never rebellious of limitation. She is the apotheosis of everything finite, my white lady—and gains a kind of eternity by her submission to time.”

He laughed over his attempt at epigram, and Barbara, catching his spirit, laughed too.

“They should have the Venus of Melos in the chapel,” she said daringly, “to correct the mysticism of the emotional.”

The mood provoked by Perceval’s sermon had vanished under Waring’s criticism. She thought herself almost convinced that the Greek ideal was healthier, saner than that of medieval Christianity, not realizing how strong was her desire to be found acceptable in his eyes.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### SPRINGTIDE.

IN the safety of the unrealized Waring trusted much. Honesty might consist in not pressing too far those shadowy witnesses of thought and emotion haunting the tribunal of the heart. The winter weeks, becoming at last spring weeks, had thrown him much with Barbara. He could not avoid being with her, he told himself, following casuistries like will-o'-the-wisps. His position as assistant professor to her husband made his frequent calls at the house obligatory. Her husband's desire that he should look after her in the social life of Hallworth was in the nature of a command to any one with gentle instincts. That he should turn back now was to admit to himself a thought which hurt his deep honor of her; to imply that he dared to love her. No, better to go on, seeking her more, not less; making of this companionship a tribute to innocence.

He would not confess to himself that he loved her; that she of all the world meant home to him. So long as he stifled this thought he was privileged to be with her. Once allow it life and he must go into exile.

Yet instinctively he sought to protect her by making calls here and there; by showing attentions here and there which for the most part wearied him to death. Perdita alone retained any hold on his interest, and this chiefly through her dear sense of humor; always taking the strain out of tragedy and making comedy more in-

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telligible. He wished more than ever that he loved her. She might not return his love, but she could point the way to peaceful exits. Sometimes he feared Barbara's very sincerity and lack of histrionic power. What would happen should she herself awaken? She was not like those hopelessly well-balanced women who would check him off their list of friends with the same pencil they used in figuring up the butcher's bill. She would suffer. To save her suffering Waring thought he would cut off his right hand.

It was in such a semi-heroic mood that he sat writing one April day in the office of *College and State*. Chiefly owing to the efforts of the Emperor the magazine had not fallen off in quality during the winter months. She had watched him and Barbara closely, and it was part of her self-imposed guardianship that the magazine should maintain its standard of excellence. An editor in love might betray himself, she thought. Whether Waring was in love or not she did not know; but, the situation seeming to her common sense a false one, she planted her outposts with a view to the logical emergency, and encouraged Waring in any attentions which he bestowed upon herself. Hallworth being in her estimation as fruitful a soil for gossip as a church sewing-society, she was continually astonished that no whisper concerning Waring's revival of medieval chivalry reached her ears. That it did not she put down to Barbara's other-worldliness and essential childlikeness. Mrs. Penfold had changed her garments; but the same soul looked out from her eyes, a soul never wholly at home in the environment where it found itself. Watching this drama, the Emperor made up her mind that she would take another

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year for her doctorate before leaving Hallworth to study law in New York.

"Did you write this editorial?" she asked, looking up from a page of proof.

"Yes," Waring answered.

"It is abominably bad."

He smiled.

"Won't you write it over for me?"

"I will, if only to save the credit of the magazine. What has gotten into you lately?"

"I write remembering the President's ironical smile over my youth and inexperience."

"He's jealous of your enthusiasms. He knows he sold his own soul years ago for a rare Anacreon."

"Let me see what I did say, anyway." He reached for the proof.

"Nothing worth remembering."

Clyde looked up from his desk. Since Waring had flung down the glove in behalf of the students he had been blindly loyal to his chief.

"You're not just, Miss Dare. I've read it. I thought it particularly good."

"But you're biased."

"Naturally—I want to get back next year."

"We'll have you back as a salaried editor, if the tuition-fee measure isn't repealed."

"Do you think there is a grain of hope?"

"I do, indeed. These mass-meetings have not been without their effect on the President, and the Faculty stands now about even. I've put it to a thorough canvass. We'll take a vote again before the term's over, if I'm not much mistaken."

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Clyde looked relieved. Knowing to the last dollar the extent of his father's resources, the question was to him vital. Already he was practicing prophetic economy, sometimes doing without a dinner that Elizabeth might have flowers for a dance. Whatever curtailments were made, she at least must not be deprived of the symbols of romance.

The three heads bent again over their work. A knock on the door, before they had time to frown, ushered Dutton into the room. He looked about him with inviting friendliness. Waring laid down his pen.

"You have good news, Dutton, you transparent soul. You don't mean to tell me you've heard already from the book?"

Dutton, still beaming, handed out a letter.

"It has just come, and of course I ran straight to you. Schelling will publish it."

"Good work!"

The Emperor gravely stretched her hand across the table and grasped Dutton's. "May it bring you all you want," she said, and, Dutton turning pink, Waring hastened to add:

"A good yearly royalty and clamors for another book."

Clyde said nothing but looked sympathetic. Student and professor were on the same plane in the democracy of romance.

"Won't you sit down? We're not as busy as we look," Waring said, when he had read the letter.

"No, thanks. I'm going up the hill."

At the door he turned back.

"By the way, Waring, have you made your decision



## SPRINGTIDE

about the summer-school? The registrar wants to know badly, for the announcements are a month late as it is."

"Are you going to teach in the summer-school after such a strenuous winter?" the Emperor said dryly.

Waring bit his lip. The decision hanging over him like an axe for the last two months must soon be made. He had not the slightest doubt as to what it would be; but he had yet to find the excuse which would satisfy his own growing severity with himself.

"I haven't made up my mind yet."

"Do—that's a dear fellow! This place isn't half bad in summer."

"Don't let him deceive you," the Emperor said. "I spent a summer here once. It's as hot as can be."

"If you happen to see Madison tell him I'll let him know this afternoon. I got his notice this morning."

After Dutton had gone Waring bent over his work with unseeing eyes. To the University world his teaching in the summer-school would seem entirely natural. Members of the Faculty, young and old, took occasional service there. Among the younger men especially it was regarded as the best and quickest means of adding to the year's salary. Waring was poor, and a summer's work at Hallworth profitable.

But he was quite aware of his motive. He knew that if Barbara were not at Hallworth nothing would tempt him to sacrifice his month or so in his beloved New York, his walking-trip through the mountains. The plan to teach in the summer-school had existed since the night when her dear eyes gazed at his, full of joy that he was not going to another university.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

He threw down his pen at last.

"I have no ideas! We'll hold it for the June number."

The Emperor looked disapproval, but Waring was only conscious of his desire to get out of doors.

Once on the forest road calmness came to him with the breath of the spring. It was a delicious April day, the soft wind bearing delicate, elusive perfumes of the stirring earth. The budding trees were outlined against the milky blue of the sky. Waring remembered a hill where as a freshman he used to go for arbutus. He would go there to-day and gather some for Barbara. She was giving a reception to her old class, the junior class, that evening, and would be glad of flowers.

As he walked along, the reason for teaching in the summer-school took shape irresistible to his temperament. If this tuition measure should not be repealed, and, in his heart, he knew the chances were not as favorable as he had represented them, could he not loan Clyde, in part, at least, the money for the first year of his post-graduate course? This loan should be earned in the summer-school.

After some searching he found the flowers, delicate pink and white blossoms, under the damp leaves. Their pure but intoxicating fragrance filled the air.

"They are like her soul," he thought, reverting to primitive metaphors, in the rush of feeling that swept over him.

He tied his plunder in his handkerchief, caught together at the four corners. He would take her his offering; then go on to the registrar's office.

## SPRINGTIDE

She came into the little drawing-room, with the gladness in her eyes always there at the sight of him. She flushed with pleasure when he gave her the flowers, and took them, handkerchief and all, in her lap.

"How did you know I love arbutus?"

"It seems to me incarnate spring, and you love the spring."

"Yes. I have been longing to get out to-day, but I have too many things to do. No, don't go. I am not so busy that I cannot see my friends."

Her voice paused on the last word. The joy of friendship had seemed to her these last weeks to transcend all other joys.

"I must go. My eleventh hour has come for seeing the registrar. He is getting out the summer-school announcements."

"You are to teach in the summer-school?"

Her tones held gladness, but repressed, as if in sudden realization that you must not show always how glad you are.

"Yes."

"When—when does it begin?"

"The sixth of July."

"And it lasts six weeks, does it not?"

"Yes."

She steeled herself for sacrifice.

"Don't you think," she said slowly, looking up into his face with troubled eyes, "that you ought to—rest, get a complete change from Hallworth? Is it right to work the year round?"

"Dr. Penfold does," he said, smiling. "I must follow the example of my chief."

## THE LAW OF LIFE

When he was gone she went up-stairs and put the arbutus in a bowl on her table, jealously tucking in each sprig and leaf, even adding the particles of black mold that clung to the damp handkerchief. This she dried before the open fire, holding it by two corners, a screen between her face and the heat. While she was sitting there Mehitabel knocked and entered.

“What are you trying to do, Mrs. Penfold?” she said. “Gimme that. I’ve got a good fire and I’ll wash and iron it both.”

“No, Mehitabel. It isn’t necessary. The handkerchief was only damp. Mr. Waring brought flowers in it.”

She felt curiously reluctant to let it go out of her hands.

“But you ain’t going to give it back to him mussed?” the worthy woman said, knitting her brows.

“No, of course not. But you need not stop your work to do it now.”

When Mehitabel had left her she folded the handkerchief and put it away in a bureau drawer; then she sat down in a window-seat, overlooking the campus, in the straight attitude she always assumed when thinking hard. Her thoughts seemed to trouble her, for she knit her brows more than once. At last she rose, went to the bureau, took out the handkerchief and descended to the kitchen with it.

“You may do it up,” she said to Mehitabel. “I—I forgot that Mr. Waring was coming to-night, and I could give it to him then.”

Mehitabel took the square of linen without a word,

## SPRINGTIDE

but when Barbara had turned away she said to herself:  
“I thought she had come to tell me something terrible.  
Poor little Missus, she don’t look well.”



## CHAPTER XXX.

### IN CONFLICT.

Two months later, on a June afternoon, Waring and Barbara were seated together on the porch of her house. He was reading aloud from a volume of verse by a young writer of the Celtic school, highly colored poetry, with its undercurrent of melancholy. It had grown second nature to go straight to her with his new discoveries or his old enthusiasms; with his plans or his disappointments. He found her always not only sympathetic but comprehending to a degree which made him wonder sometimes how many centuries she had lived. That this understanding of his life might become tragically sweet he would not pause to think. Two souls might meet on heights, despite the low-creeping and envious world.

Barbara, for her part, was conscious only of living more fully, and with more satisfaction than ever before. The joy of her childhood seemed pale and narrow contrasted with the new energies awakened in her. Everything interested her now. She felt that she was beginning to love Hallworth as earnestly and devotedly as Waring could wish. For her husband her affection was deepening. Though more and more they lived each their separate lives, yet she was conscious of wishing to include him in her new happiness. She watched his moods as if the fortunes of the University depended on them.

He, for his part, responded with gentle gratitude;

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glad that she was happy, and in this friendly, platonic sense part of his life. The incidental character of the passion which had made him a married man had been long ago revealed to him, but with no element of regret; simply the self-revelation that above anything else he was a mathematician. As long as Barbara was happy, he could not feel he had done her a wrong.

He was absent now on a three days' trip to New York to see his publishers and to transact some other business. Waring was taking his classes, and calling twice a day to learn if Barbara needed any service which he could render.

The glory of summer rose before her as he read, the pomps of life advancing in splendor over rich green meadows and fruitful orchards. She moved her chair a little that the sun might fall full upon her. Beyond the porch the campus spread gay with youth and June. Suddenly through this golden haze Waring's voice reached her, low and uncertain:

“Morfydd at midnight  
Met the Nameless Ones.  
Now she wanders on the winds  
Wan and lone.  
I would give the light of eternal suns  
To be with her on the winds  
No more lone.”

“I do not like that. It spells death,” she interrupted. “Read me more of his nature poetry.”

Waring closed the book, his face colorless with his abstraction.

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"It all ends in death," he said. "Do you remember Perceval's sermon?"

"Are we reversing creeds?" she answered, smiling. "Are you becoming a mystic—I a Greek?"

"I only ask to become a man," he said, in a voice harsh with some self-criticism, and closing the volume he rose. At the same moment they saw the Emperor coming up the garden-path.

"Here comes my embodied editorial conscience. I assure you I spend my days eluding Miss Dare."

He tossed the last words to the Emperor, and she caught them with her usual light scorn.

"And well you may. *College and State* has brought me to the verge of nervous prostration. I lost ten pounds last month—and Sir Richard gets the glory."

"I am going straight to the office now," he said penitently. "And you may lock me in for the next five hours."

"Well, be off as quickly as you can. I want to talk with Barbara."

"I hope to see you to-night at Mrs. Maturin's reception," he said, as he turned from them.

The Emperor seated herself in Waring's chair. A Shelley which had figured in the morning's reading lay on the wicker stool by it. She picked it up, smiled, and tossed it down again, then addressed herself to Barbara.

"My little lady, have you any plans for the summer?"

"No. Dr. Penfold rarely goes away. He has, of course, a book on hand. I shall stay and see that he's comfortable while he's at work on it."

"Is that necessary?"

## IN CONFLICT

A delicate flush overspread Barbara's face.

"What do you mean, Helena?" she said, with dignity.

"Couldn't he spare you for a few weeks? Couldn't Mehitabel look after him?"

"I suppose so, if I had to go away. But there is nothing to call me away."

"Yes there is—the summer vacation that you ought to have. Elizabeth and I have planned to go to the Maine coast about the first of July for six weeks or two months, and we want you to join us. You really ought to come, Barbara. Sparta is an enervating place in summer—all inland towns are—and the sea-air would set you up. You'd come back fresh, made over, ready for the year."

Her careless manner had dropped from her. She spoke earnestly, almost imploringly.

The flush in Barbara's face deepened.

"I—I cannot leave—my husband," she faltered. "I should not enjoy it—thinking of—him here in the heat, working alone."

"I think he'd work a good deal better, knowing you were out of this furnace," the Emperor said bluntly.

Barbara's flush turned to pallor.

"Please don't urge me," she said, "for I can only say no."

"I won't take no for an answer. You needn't decide now. Think it over and tell me some time before commencement."

"Elizabeth is graduating, isn't she?" Barbara said, for the sake of changing the subject.

"Yes."

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"Will she come back next year?"

"Yes, for her M. A. She and Frederick will have about ten letters between them by the time they get ready to marry."

"He's going on with his course, then?"

"Yes, 'spite of the fact our quixotic editorials failed of the purpose."

"What a pity the tuition measure wasn't repealed."

"It was a pity," said the Emperor dryly. "I'm afraid my chief has met his match in Dr. Hunt. However, we fought a good fight."

"How is Frederick Clyde managing to come back?"

"I suspect Sir Richard is at the bottom of it. I think he will loan him the money."

Barbara's eyes lighted, as they always did when she heard Waring praised.

The Emperor rose to go.

"Now think over our Maine coast plan. You don't know heaven till you know that coast. Dear," her voice grew tender, caressing, "I want you very much."

She was rarely personal, but for a moment her fear and anxiety mastered her. She drew Barbara to her, and Barbara, suddenly afraid lest tears should come to her eyes, put her head down an instant against her friend's breast.

When the Emperor was gone Barbara went up-stairs to her room and locked herself in. The woe that came creeping toward her under that gorgeous mantle of triumphant summer life could no longer be ignored. She was face to face with her lie. The realization was yet negative. She knew that she had not told the Em-



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peror the truth when she said she could not leave her husband. What the truth was she dared not guess. The room becoming intolerable to her after a time, she went for a long walk into the loneliest part of the country she knew thereabouts.

“Is Mrs. Penfold here?” Waring asked his hostess.

“I think she is still here,” Mrs. Maturin answered.

“She came only half an hour ago.”

Mrs. Maturin stood at the entrance to her drawing-room receiving her guests alone. As had been her custom since she came to Hallworth a bride, she was giving her June reception to the University, with the exception of the freshman, sophomore and junior classes. The rooms, opening in every direction, were full of people inspired by that peculiar gaiety which always attended the breaking up of the University for the summer vacation. Through this throng Waring had searched in vain for Barbara. The other women he did not see.

“Whither away, Sir Galahad?” said a voice at his elbow.

He turned. Mrs. Joyce’s mocking eyes challenged him. He would rather have met any one else, but for this very reason he plunged into more elaborate courtesies. Of late he had called so faithfully upon her that she had become most gracious to him.

“Have you been into the supper-room?”

“No. Herbert was seized with a working fit, of all preposterous nights, and went away like a rude creature after staying about three minutes. I do believe he’s gone to Scheffel’s to drink beer with that horrible German Dr. Hunt brought over. Have you seen him? They say

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he knows more about the dative case than any man on this planet, and he looks it! Mrs. Cartwright had him to dinner, and he appeared in a gray flannel shirt. Yet Herbert prefers him to me.”

She pouted and looked injured. Waring, at her side, listened to her chatter with a smiling, responsive face; but his heart was heavy with impatience and longing. Barbara might go away meanwhile, and one word from her would create a new heaven and a new earth. Face to face with his love for her, he was resolved to carry it daringly, recklessly, into the high places of the spirit. It should not curse him but bless him, this new enfolding light.

Mrs. Joyce kept him with her for an hour, but at last, another man of her acquaintance claiming her, he was free to seek Barbara. He thought that she must have gone, and it was with a thrill of joy that he found her in the picture gallery, seated by Perdita, who seemed to be carrying on the conversation with little aid from her companion. Barbara, gowned in a severely plain, low-cut evening dress of black, and wearing neither jewels nor flowers, looked stately and distinguished, but not youthful. The pallor of her face seemed less the result of physical weariness than of some mental strain. Perdita, watching her as she herself talked cleverly of nothing in particular, was reminded of the night on which Barbara had come to her, and she had soothed her with a fairy-tale. But fairy-tales were no longer for the matron.

“Won’t you persuade Mrs. Penfold to go to the supper-room?” Perdita said. “She tells me that she took a very long walk this afternoon, and came home too tired to eat. She should have a cup of coffee.”

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Barbara smiled.

"Indeed, I don't care for anything," she said, trying to keep the weariness out of her voice. She did not look at Waring as she spoke, but leaned back in her seat, putting a detaining hand on Perdita's wrist.

"You promised to tell me of your meeting with the new German. I am sure Mr. Waring would like to hear it."

"Mrs. Joyce says he's a savage," Waring answered, seating himself opposite the two women.

Perdita, conscious of Barbara's desire to keep her by her, began an amusing account of the learned Teuton. Waring listened and laughed, and Barbara commented, but always avoiding his eyes. It was becoming clear to him that since morning something had wrought a change in her, and he tormented himself with questions. Had he betrayed his secret in an unguarded glance? a word too strongly accented? a word unsaid? Was she having a conventional moment? Or was she playing at being worldly?—Barbara, so mystically scornful of the artificial! He could not tell, but he was troubled, hurt by her aloofness, her studied coldness, as if it implied some distrust of him. Did she not know, he thought, that no matter what he might suffer, he would protect her from himself; that his continued intimacy with her was but one way of saying she was immune from the disease which might unsettle his own spirit; that malady of the soul expressed in a desire of the impossible.

Perdita rose as she finished her story, and Barbara rose too.

"I must bid my hostess good-night," she said; then,

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without looking directly at Waring, she bowed to him, as if they had met but yesterday, and followed Miss Ravenel out of the gallery. Waring remained, staring with unseeing eyes at a Corot hung just above the seat that Barbara had occupied. Between its twilight witchery and his dull gaze her face obtruded itself, pale, preoccupied and beautiful. The vision hurt him!

Having left him so abruptly, misery overtook Barbara. Fear of herself possessed her; fear of the lonely night in her husband's house. The thoughts which had made of her walk into the country a breathless flight from her own heart still lurked in the background of her consciousness, ready to steal upon her, ghost-like, the moment she should be alone.

"You are not going, Mrs. Penfold?"

Mrs. Maturin held her hand detainingly, moved by she knew not what appeal in the pallor of the younger woman's face.

"I was—but—but could I see you, speak to you after the guests are gone? I am not feeling—well, and—Dr. Penfold is away."

"Stay with me to-night. I will send word to your maid."

She spoke with decision, realizing that Barbara was in some mental distress, and as yet too young to act as an experienced woman of the world.

"May I?"

"Of course you may. And I want you!"

Barbara, conscious only of her relief that she was not going back to the accusing house, wandered into the library and took a seat near the fireplace. She had been there but a moment when Waring came to her.

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"I am come to say good-night," he said gently, as if their last parting had been but an ugly dream. "I feared you were not well. You look tired."

If he had reproached her implicitly by an aloof manner she could have borne it better; but the gentleness unnerved her, and it was with difficulty that she kept the tears from her voice as she answered.

"I took too long a walk this afternoon. Mrs. Maturin is very kind. She is keeping me with her to-night."

"That is good."

He talked on of one thing and another, knowing in his heart that he had no business to linger, but under the full domination of his need of her. She listened without looking at him, her eyes fixed on the carved words above the fireplace:

"My soul, an alien here, hath flown to nobler wars."

She read them over and over, noting every turn of the carving with that closeness of observation which is an accompanying characteristic of certain moods. At last she was conscious that she was rising, giving her hand to Waring again, saying good-night to him. Other people came and spoke to her. Then she was left alone.

The silence was broken by the soft rustle of a silk train. Mrs. Maturin stood beside her.

"They are all gone. Shall we go up-stairs?"

They went together through the silent house, fragrant with the odor of roses about to die. The air seemed yet delicately electric with the spirit of the guests, as if their light words lingered in that fairness.

Mrs. Maturin led Barbara to a small room, a bower of pink and white.



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"I keep this for my girl friends. I thought perhaps you would sleep better here than in a larger room. Here is a dressing-gown. Won't you come to me when you have made yourself comfortable? I shall send Therese to take down your hair."

She covered up Barbara's silence with these little nothings, then, turning to go, kissed her.

"You'll find me just across the hall. We must have a cup of bouillon together."

Barbara, left alone, looked about strangely at this room, with its roses and true-lover knots, its Madonnas, and dainty, ingenuous furniture.

"I do not belong here," she thought. Oh, to be a girl again, and to know what she knew now!

The mere physical comfort of giving herself into the hands of the skilful maid sent to her, soothed her troubled nerves. When her long hair had been braided, and a soft silk gown slipped over her, she felt less tragic, more reasonable. She could ask calmly now certain abstract questions which Mrs. Maturin seemed supremely fitted to answer.

The maid, preceding her, ushered her into the bed-chamber of her hostess, furnished, as was the library, with memories. Its luxury belonged to the past; its ascetic atmosphere, felt strangely through the symbols of love and wealth, to the present. The low lamp burning on a table near the narrow bed left the greater part of the place in darkness. Barbara was grateful for this.

Mrs. Maturin, sipping her bouillon, waited for her guest to speak.

"It is good of you to shelter me to-night," Barbara said uncertainly, then paused.

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"I thought you looked very tired—perhaps ill—and it is not right for you to be alone."

Barbara leaned back in her chair.

"I suppose I should not have come. You should give only your gayest self to society."

Mrs. Maturin smiled.

"I'm afraid we'd all be stay-at-homes under that condition. No; I'm glad you came. You are giving me a double pleasure."

"Does life ever seem difficult to you?"

"Much of the time."

"I wonder if it is ever perfectly clear to people."

"Sometimes," Mrs. Maturin answered, giving herself up without surprise to this catechism. She did not expect Mrs. Penfold to act with convention under circumstances so unconventional.

"Have you ever been—perfectly clear?"

"Yes—once."

Barbara studied a moment, then she said:

"May I ask a—a strange question. May I ask when?"

"During my marriage," her hostess answered in a low voice.

"Because you were—happy?"

"Yes."

"Do you think that to every one—at some time comes that clearness, that certainty?"

"Not to every one, no. Some are not capable of deep feeling."

She turned and looked at her guest. Barbara was staring into the twilight of the room, her cheek pressed against the back of the chair.

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"Some are not capable of deep feeling," she repeated slowly.

"No—dear."

Barbara turned the knife in her heart. She would face the truth though it damned her.

"What are the—signs of this feeling?"

"You mean the outward and visible signs?"

"Yes, the genuine hall-mark."

Mrs. Maturin smiled.

"Does it not differ with temperament?"

"Your conception, then?"

"Mine?"

"Yes—if I am not too insistent."

"I think—it makes you want to pray."

"Yes," Barbara said, with a little catch of her breath.

"And love the whole universe—if that were possible!"

"Yes."

"And be quite simple in thought and language."

"Yes."

"And it makes you love the out-door world."

"Yes."

"And live in the present. Everything beautiful is more beautiful, music, art, nature. You know at last what they mean."

"Yes."

"And you are purified—ennobled."

Barbara was silent.

"Ah, it is God Himself come down to make you happy. You, of all the world!"

Barbara was silent.

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Mrs. Maturin, turning to her, saw that her face was as white as the ruffles of the gown at her throat. She rose in sudden alarm.

“Mrs. Penfold, you look ill—what is the matter?”

Barbara rose too, trying to smile, conscious now only of the desire to keep her misery from her face.

“I’m not ill—just tired,” she faltered. “I think—I think I shall go to bed.”

Athena looked at her anxiously.

“You will not take a little wine?”

“No, thank you. I’m just—tired.”

Athena drew her to her a moment. Suddenly by a flash of intuition she saw Waring’s face against the background of the evening’s events. She put the thought from her, as too dreadful in its suggestions of tragedy to be entertained for a moment.

Barbara, alone with her thoughts, could not bear them. She lit the night-lamp and looked about for something to read. A Bible was on the little stand by the bed. The stormy book of the Revelation drew her, and she read on and on. Dawn found her still wide-eyed, but at last she dropped to sleep, two strange sentences passing again and again through her brain, like ghosts from the day’s wreck—

“My soul, an alien here, hath flown to nobler wars”;  
“And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.”

## CHAPTER XXXI.

“DID YOU WISH ME TO BE HAPPY?”

A NEW day brought sanity. Reaction from the emotions which had stirred her nature to its foundations left her skeptical and glad to turn to the prosaic. She spent the morning in the kitchen, helping Mehitabel preserve the early strawberries. The good woman's homely talk brought her back to the wholesome working-day world.

The mood lasted till afternoon. Then, with the growing romance of the hours, restlessness seized her. She would take a walk into the country, but she would control her thoughts.

On the campus she met the Emperor hurrying to a late lecture. She stopped her. One burden at least she need not carry.

“I did not tell you the truth yesterday,” she began abruptly, “when I said I could not leave Dr. Penfold.” She hesitated, but the Emperor did not give her time to go on.

“Barbara, you shouldn't indulge your New England conscience; I don't care anything about your reasons for not going—only for going. You will go with us?”

“I'm not sure.”

“You don't dare refuse!”

She was off before Barbara could answer.



## “DID YOU WISH ME TO BE HAPPY?”

Walking alone on the forest road, Barbara thought that her duty lay clear before her. Not flight, no! That would be cowardly, an acknowledgment that the feeling in her heart was wrong. The joy that Waring had brought into her life should remain joy. God must be her guest.

But the mysticism in her was passing away like fog before the powerful summer sun. The mistake of her marriage stood in clear, hard outline. She knew now the nature of that obscure suffering which had haunted her wifehood. She had married before she knew what love was. But her husband? Had he not known? A sudden resentment filled her toward this gentle scholar who had bound her hand and foot with a passing passion of his absorbed life.

Yet the recognition that she had been, after all, a free agent dogged her. She must not be unjust because she had been brought up a dreamer, by a dreamer.

The turning in accusation upon the dead added hurt to hurt, salt upon raw wounds. She could not bear it. Whatever she had done, she cried, she must take upon herself the full blame. That dear head in its last sleep she could only bless with remorseful tenderness. Was she right, either, in reproaching her husband? Had he not acted by a law of his nature, as she by a law of hers? Entrapped by life, circumstances, was not blame the height of folly? Whatever the future held of suffering and readjustment, she must part from the past with a blessing.

But the ideal, too high, mocked her depleted power. The rebellious thoughts possessed her. She wished that she had asked some one to come with her, that she might

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have been obliged to fix her mind on the affairs of the moment. She was glad when, coming toward her along the country road, she saw Elizabeth and Frederick Clyde. Since her marriage she had been more intimate with the Emperor than with Elizabeth, but the affection between herself and this girl was essential in its nature; little dependent, therefore, upon association.

"I am so glad to meet the two graduates," she said, smiling. "I've been wanting the opportunity to congratulate them both."

"And the best of it is we're both coming back again!" Elizabeth said. "We're so happy we're getting superstitious—we're afraid it won't last. You look pale, Barbara. Aren't you well?"

"I'm tired, I think," Barbara said; "it is so good to know I'll have you another year."

"It is Mr. Waring's doings largely," Clyde said. "But he's always helping some one out."

The color came into Barbara's face. She smiled.

"Turn back and walk with us," Elizabeth said.

"Not to-day. I must go on a little farther."

She would not disturb their companionship, great as was her need of it. What they meant to each other she was beginning to understand.

She walked on in a happier mood. Could not this love be made a source of blessing to her? Waring was good, was noble. Might they not live in an ideal world, each stimulating the other to higher planes of life; each working for Hallworth, content with unrealized romance.

## “DID YOU WISH ME TO BE HAPPY?”

The road, which had followed the broad, clamoring stream, now swerved away from it, and Barbara entered the wood to walk by the swift water. Coming to an inviting bank of moss under a pine-tree, she seated herself and began in childish fashion to throw sticks and twigs and bits of moss into the current, that she might watch them whirl away. A butterfly, its yellow wings clogged and useless, was being borne along. She reached over to save it, almost losing her balance, and felt a thrill of pleasure in the rescue of this bit of life. It should go back to June and joy, when its little wings were dried.

June and joy! She bowed her head on her knees, the hopeful spirit gone from her; revolt and misery possessing her. Souls might be of even less moment in the universe than a drowned butterfly. Why did they all struggle so to live? Was it in the hope of some day going forth to meet their dreams? But the barriers! Some could never go forth, because they had put themselves in prison.

She began to be aware after a time that the sun had gone into a bank of cloud, and thunder was muttering in the distance. All her life she had been afraid of thunder-storms, but in her present mood she was inclined to welcome their terrors.

So she sat on, careless of the threatening twilight which filled the wood. Every branch, every twig stood out motionless in the thick yellow air; then the roar of the wind reached her, coming toward her from the tormented trees across the stream. In another instant heavy drops were falling. Then a flash of fire enveloped her. The world crashed about her. She leaned her head

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back against a tree-trunk, a tall pine tossing its branches to the livid, close-pressing sky.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Barbara! Get up!”

Waring stood over her, his face white against the gloom. He stooped and lifted her to her feet.

“What do you mean,” he said harshly, “by sitting out in a storm like this?”

She looked at him with pleading eyes. The anxiety in his voice was music to her.

“I wasn’t—thinking of the storm. I—I didn’t care.”

“But I care! You don’t want your—friends taken from you. And you see I have cause to fear,” he added, in a more relaxed tone, “whom the gods love die young.”

She smiled.

“I am afraid I am not in that category.”

He was guiding her through the dripping wood. Toward the west the sky was growing lighter.

“There’s a farm-house on the farther side of the wood. We can go there.”

She was suddenly ashamed of herself, as if caught in an act of cowardice.

“I’m sorry I made you anxious. But how did you come to find me?”

“I met Frederick and Elizabeth. They told me that they’d spoken with you—that you’d gone on. The storm was coming then. I went to the farm-house, thinking you’d sought shelter there; then back to the wood. You were sitting so still when I first saw you I thought the lightning had struck you.”

“DID YOU WISH ME TO BE HAPPY?”

“Please forgive me! I’m so sorry I’ve made you trouble.”

“You are forgiven.”

She walked beside him in a glow of happiness that she had no will at the moment to extinguish. The sound of that word “Barbara,” vibrating with his love, would be in her ears till death. She had been named anew.

When they reached the porch of the farm-house the rain was ceasing. The washed air, sweet and cool, drew toward them, swaying a long branch of red climbing roses. Barbara picked one, hurting her fingers with the thorns. Waring, watching her fasten it in her dress, was mute, suddenly shy as a child in her presence.

“Frederick tells me it is owing to you that he can come back next year.”

Waring frowned.

“Clyde doesn’t exaggerate. You are very noble—  
She turned a calm face to him.

“Clyde doesn’t exaggerate. You are very noble—  
generous.”

She was telling him what she wanted him to be, telling him with her eyes, her mouth, her face alight with a new revelation.

“Don’t make me ashamed,” he said in a low voice. “I’m no high-flyer—and it’s easy enough to do those things—pardon me—but it’s quite damnably easy. There are others—far more—difficult.”

He looked at her intently. She dropped her eyes. The youth in her yearned to him. Why could they not take hands and go away together into that evening world, happy and innocent? Fearful lest her thoughts



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should show in her face and betray her, she suddenly said :

“The rain is almost over. We must go back. No, you need not raise the umbrella.”

They walked along in a silence which had ceased to be embarrassing. They had crossed the border of friendship, but they had not gone far enough into the iridescent world to be altogether blinded by its shifting light and color. Rather they were pausing on its boundaries, gazing at it as those who look upon a place for the last time. Both knew that they must turn back. But privileged by that prospective nobility they lingered. Barbara was busy constructing a dream-world in which she continually gave him up, and continually claimed him. Hers and not hers! Such must be the terms of this new relationship. Waring was thinking of her, sitting motionless under the pine-tree, as if waiting for the judgment of heaven. The vision intoxicated him. He had seen her turn pale and tremble once during a storm. That she should expose herself to the elements with indifference told him much. Joy, unreasonable, tragic, unutterable, surged through him, possessed him. Her soul was his!

That evening Barbara was seated in her husband's study awaiting his return. She had put the room in order without destroying the impression of disorder which seemed necessary to Dr. Penfold's performance of his work. Vases of flowers were on the side-tables. His brown velvet house-coat hung over the chair by his desk.

His key in the door brought her down-stairs with eager, appealing welcome. Her face in the lamp-light

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turned to his was filled with a strange, new, comprehending affection.

“Barbara, my dear! I can’t tell you how glad I am to be home. New York is a horrible place. How people live in it and keep their sanity I don’t know. There’s Schelling—sits all day in an office with elevated trains roaring past the window every two minutes. No—I don’t want anything to eat. I’m all upset with hotel cooking. Mehitabel, you might send me up some dry toast and hot water about eleven.”

Mehitabel, taking his bag, smiled grimly. What maternal feeling she possessed went out to Dr. Penfold. She was always apprehensive when he departed on his rare journeys, and welcomed him back as one miraculously preserved from unknown dangers.

Barbara brought him his slippers and his velvet jacket, and poured out for him a tiny glass of his precious Amontillado, sent to him by a Spanish astronomer, once a visitor at Hallworth.

When he had made himself comfortable, he turned his deep leather chair not to the study table but to the fireplace, filled with a bowl of June roses.

“Where did you get those, my dear?”

“From my garden.”

“Thank God, I’m home! Have you been lonely, Barbara?”

A flush overspread her face.

“I missed you very much, but I had a good deal to do. I—I helped Mehitabel put up the strawberries.”

“Has Waring been here?”

Barbara bent over and picked an imaginary thread from the carpet.

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“Yes, he was here every day——” She hesitated.  
“On Wednesday and Thursday he came twice.”

The truth left her pale, but her husband’s attention was already drifting to his work. The spirit of the room took easy possession of him. He began to finger the papers on the desk.

“I put your mail in the right-hand drawer. There is a good deal of it.”

“I shan’t look at it to-night.”

“But you’re not going to work?”

Dr. Penfold looked apologetic.

“Well, you see, my dear, I’ve lost three days. I might have come back at night, but I never sleep in those abominable cars,”

“Did you make good terms with your publishers?”  
Barbara asked.

The question surprised him a little. He did not know that she was aware of the commercial world. But the kind, solicitous tone of her voice explained her words. A comfortable feeling possessed him, as of fire-light in winter.

“Schelling’s a very fair fellow, and he doesn’t take advantage of me because I’m not a business man. I always feel perfectly safe in his hands.”

He spoke with a certain innocence and trustfulness which hurt Barbara. Her idealism formed no shield against the simple words. Her conscience, always ready to spring at her throat, demanded of her if she, a wife, were less true, less fair to her husband than a mere stranger was to him. This same innocent abstraction which prevented his being a good business man might afford her dangerous freedom. Had she taken an unfair

“DID YOU WISH ME TO BE HAPPY?”

advantage of his eternal preoccupation? Was he perfectly safe in her hands? The questions evoked only misery for answer, and in self-defence she cried that he himself had thrust her into the world of Hallworth, had given her over to Waring's care.

Her thoughts making her restless, she moved about the room, touching the flowers in the vases and adjusting some books on a side-table.

“I think—I think if you're going to work I'll go to my room,” she said, forcing herself to a smile. “I am tired to-night.”

“Very well, my dear.”

Already he answered from a mathematical solitude. She knew the withdrawn voice.

Undressing, she felt something soft and sharp against her breast. As she loosened a ribbon, she saw, lying upon her white flesh like a deep clot of blood, the rose she had picked that afternoon. Shame enveloped her in a deeper crimson. She knew why she had taken it from the swaying branch, her act vicarious. He could not do it. She did it for him, had slipped the flower in her dress as his gift. Suddenly it seemed monstrous lying there. She tore its drooping petals to pieces, and, going to the window, scattered them upon the warm night.

It was midnight. Dr. Penfold, in full ecstatic swing of insurmountable difficulties, was enjoying his opium dream of number. Through the open windows June, fragrant as a queen, entered and caressed one blind and insensate to her seductions. The air, vibrant with life, seemed to bear the souls of lovers upon its bosom.

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The door opened, Barbara stood before him, tall and pale in her long white dressing-gown. She had the air of one meeting judgment half way. Instinctively he rose.

"Dear, are you ill? I had thought you asleep hours ago."

"Amos," she said, her voice trembling, "I want to ask you something. Last fall, when I was grieving so for my—child, and you wanted me to go out here in Hallworth—accept my invitations—did you wish me to be happy? Was it—for that reason?"

"Why, yes, my dear," her husband said, with a bewildered look. To be brought back from infinity by the sleepless feminine required an interval of readjustment. "Of course I wished you to be happy!"

"I have been—I am—happy. Now it seems—wrong that I should become happy, outside of your—house."

"Wrong, Barbara? You are young, child; your husband a hard worker. No one could expect you to live out your life in these four walls."

The strange misery in her eyes troubled him. He wished that she were not so conscientious. Why should she begrudge herself the pleasure which had been the very warrant of his freedom to work?

"I see your uncle in you," he said, smiling at her to reassure her. "He was even more of a dreamer than I am or you are, and I remember he told me once that he was afraid of happiness, as some men would be of sin."

A wave of color swept over Barbara's face.

"You think it is always right to be happy if—if—you do not neglect your duty."



“DID YOU WISH ME TO BE HAPPY?”

“Surely! And, my dear, if you have any fault, it is that you are over-conscientious. Now go back and go to sleep.”

He spoke with a playful assumption of authority; she smiled faintly as she bade him good-night.

He did not at once resume his work. That look in her eyes seemed too tragic to justify instant forgetfulness. What was the matter? Was she run down? Or was it merely a mood, or the result of temporary nervousness? He pondered for some moments, but the problem of feminine vagaries seeming infinitely more difficult than that on the page before him, he turned again to his task.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### TWO LETTERS.

“DEAR, my dear Barbara,” the letter ran, “if I were the kind of person whose feelings came through my chest easily, I should now write that you have marred the summer world for me by refusing to come to Maine. You should by every law of my need of you be here between sea and sky, instead of watching the death of the campus at Hallworth, and the enthusiasms of the ‘thirsters’ who go to that unpardonable mistake, the summer-school. You and I, who are far too wise to be learned, should be swimming together, basking together on the rocks, and looking into the emerald world—emerald—yes, every gem the universe holds is in this sea and sky.

“Elizabeth’s far-away California mother has been able to leave all the other children and to come to her learned but happy daughter and her prospective son-in-law, and the three are like two-year-olds together. Elizabeth sends her love. She would send it anywhere, to any one, she is so happy, but she does care deeply for you. The world is sharing her romance; and we, who are always afraid of our sense of humor, look on and wish we could be romantic too. But it is not in the role of an ‘Emperor.’

“I heard that Sir Richard was called to New York immediately after commencement by the convenient death of an uncle, who leaves him a pittance; not much,

## TWO LETTERS

I believe, but enough, as I wrote him, to swell his yearly contribution to the heathen. What dull wit! I am too healthy to be clever these days.

“Barbara, change your mind and come to your obedient  
EMPEROR.”

Barbara smiled over this letter, then took up another, lying in her lap still unopened. It had come that morning, but she had deferred the reading of it until every household duty had been performed with unusual care.

She thought now that she would take a little walk as far as the woods, on the edge of the campus, and in their shelter read the first letter she had ever had from him.

It was the third of July. Just three weeks ago he had been summoned to New York; only three weeks, but with their burden of revelation they seemed like the womb of eternity. The days, dragging their length of summer light along, had seemed endless to her; the short nights too short to quiet pain. Out of this malady one sane, clear thought emerged. She knew that she loved him too well to see much of him. The veil of idealism, shimmering and deluding as it was, could no longer hide the naked form of fact. The dream of unrealized romance was neither safe nor true. They could not commit themselves to God, and then play like children on the edge of the gulf. God's omnipotence did not extend to lovers.

She tore herself with facts as with knives. Her husband's playful reproach of her being over-conscientious, if it had shown her nothing else, had shown her his utter

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innocence of the situation. All the honor of her nature rose to meet the obligation of his ignorance. He should indeed be safe in her hands. Through the misery of these days she ministered to him with remorseful tenderness.

She had fully made up her mind that she would see as little as possible of Waring during his term in the summer-school. She would see him always in her husband's presence. The ultimate step of leaving him and Hallworth altogether for these few weeks she could not bring herself to take. She told herself that that was cowardice; that the highest duty was to submit to the severest temptation; that the soundest goodness was born of holding one's ground. The subtle logic of her lingering escaped her.

Leaving word with Mehitabel where she was going, she set out on her walk across the campus. The noon heat rising from the ground, with a heavy odor of warm grass and earth, beat against her face.

The American summer was in full possession of the broad lawns, the trees burdened with foliage, the lifeless buildings baking under the direct noon rays, suggestive of dusty books, and close, shut up laboratories, with big flies knocking against the unwashed windows. Barbara thought that even the summer-school could not break the deepness of the torpor.

The green wood received her with caresses of cool shadow, and hidden music from the deep-bedded stream. A draught of cooler air was wafted up from the ravine. On the rude bench between two trees she seated herself, but she did not at once open her letter, delighting to prolong expectancy. She was almost afraid to open it, lest it should disappoint her. Yet what could he say?

## TWO LETTERS

The good moment came at last.

"Dear Mrs. Penfold," it ran.

"Since I came to New York I have been so rushed that I have not had time to send a line of apology to you for leaving so abruptly commencement evening. The telegram was unnecessarily urgent.

"I was with my father's brother a week before he died. He was almost a stranger to me, for he had lived nearly all his life abroad; but in those last days something—the sense of kinship perhaps, or our common loneliness—drew us together. It was a strange friendship, made so near the confines.

"I am coming back to the place I love and shall always love better than any on earth—Hallworth. It will be good to go to work again. I have much more to tell you about these three weeks—that is, if you care to hear; but I shall wait until I see you.

"Always faithfully yours,

"RICHARD WARING."

She put the letter down, contented. She might show it to the world of Hallworth, yet something thrilled through the words to which she only was the answering chord. "Our common loneliness!" How glad she was that he was lonely, surrounded though he seemed to be with friends!

A thought oppressed her. Her emotion seemed to her changeless, final. His might be transitory. What if he should——!

She checked herself. She had no right to think of him at all as belonging to her. Faithfulness to her husband must begin in her heart. She could not make the



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blamelessness of her outward life a balance on the moral page for inner sin.

Bitterness welled in her. First love came to the majority of women attended by innocence and candor. They could show how glad they were.

She wondered what wrong-doing of the prenatal past, the dim past which held her progenitors, was being atoned for in this her misery of defrauded life. Had some ancestor gone gaily along the primrose path, that she should never pick a primrose. She remembered their austere portraits, lining the hall in her old home, but could not find the guilty one among them. They had all fallen on sleep, serving God in their generation, serving Him, if the expression of their stern faces might be trusted, with fear, not love. Perhaps the sorrow of her line had come upon her in this guise, rather than in bitter wrestlings with a God reluctant to bless.

She longed for her uncle. He might tell her what had happened to him, and how he had met his problem. Looking back now, she knew that it had not been an altogether normal and healthy life he had led. Had his mistakes of living led her to hers?

What was the use of wondering? Her duty lay clear before her. She must see as little as possible of Waring. The letter in her lap came to her from one dead.

• "I think this is yours, Mrs. Penfold."

She looked up startled. Perceval was standing by her, holding the envelope of her letter in his hand. The breeze had blown it to his feet.

She thanked him, blushing. He asked her permission to sit down beside her, and she made room for him on the bench.

## TWO LETTERS

“Have you been taking a walk this hot morning?” she asked; thinking he looked tired.

“To some one ill back in the country. Sickness in the height of summer always seems unnatural to me, somehow. You feel as if every one should share the abundant life. How is Dr. Penfold?”

“Very well—very busy,” she answered, smiling faintly.

The address on the envelope had stared at him from the ground. He recognized Waring’s hand. Mrs. Penfold’s look of abstraction, her blush, told him much; but, being a true priest, he relegated what it told him at once to his storehouse of the impersonal.

But he had been too unhappy himself these last months not to wish to make others as happy as he could, and his instinctive desire now was to change the current of Barbara’s thoughts, whatever they were. He had attended a recent diocesan convention, and he began to speak to her, not of its proceedings, but of the little humorous incidents that had lightened its somewhat ponderous atmosphere. Barbara listened and laughed, and stole glances at the enigmatical face beside her, which held at once the priest’s ardor and the man of the world’s indifference. Did two souls contend for the mastery there?

They walked back together across the campus. Once Perceval cast a quick, eager look toward the gardens surrounding Mrs. Maturin’s house, now tenantless, save for the caretakers. She herself had gone abroad.

Barbara asked him if he would take lunch with them, but he declined on the plea of early afternoon work. There was a certain sweetness, a certain friendliness in

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his manner toward her which, though in its essence impersonal, made her feel that she could trust him. She wanted to ask him why duty made people miserable.

On the porch she found her husband, signing for a telegram. She seated herself opposite to him and waited for him to read it.

"It is from Richard," he explained, "in answer to one I sent yesterday about Schelling. He went to see him. He arrives to-night, I'm glad to say."

"Mr. Waring arrives?"

"Yes; he's going to help me with the book. Schelling wants it by September instead of November. I'm thankful Richard's in the summer-school; I should scarcely have felt justified in keeping him here for my own benefit."

"It will not be—a very restful summer for him—or for you," she said.

"Oh, no; but one can be more comfortable in one's own home than anywhere else."

"But Mr. Waring's not in his own home."

"Why not take him in?" her husband said. "The guest-room is there. Mehitabel likes him."

Barbara sat up straight, her face full of her ill-concealed alarm.

"Oh, no, no! That couldn't be!" she said hastily. "He mustn't come here. He—he wouldn't like to give up his independence!"

Her husband looked at her with some surprise, but he thought that she dreaded the responsibility of a two months' guest in the height of summer.

"Perhaps you are right. He might think I was chaining him to the book."

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"The ex-President's house is so large it must be cool. He'd be far more comfortable there than in our little rooms."

She spoke with apprehensive insistence, as if afraid the matter were not settled. Her husband looked at her intently.

"What are your plans for the summer, my dear? Should you not go away for a few weeks to the shore or to the mountains? Isn't that what society people do?" he added playfully. "And you are now launched in society."

"Do you want me to go?"

"I want you to do whatever pleases you most."

If he would only once command her! It would make it so much easier! The woman whose husband beat and abused her must be more a part of that husband's life, she thought, than she was of this gentle mathematician's, whose continued wish that she should please herself seemed to imply that he had no real need of her.

"But wouldn't you be more comfortable if I stayed—wouldn't you like it better?"

He pondered.

"I should not wish to sacrifice you to my comfort, my dear, and Mehitabel is always faithful."

"I sometimes wish she'd leave!"

He looked pleased.

"Oh, my dear," he said, with a little laugh; "if you knew what some of the people go through on this campus."

"Of course I didn't mean it. But I can't be less faithful than she is," she answered, a flush stealing into her cheeks. "And I don't want to go away!"

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He smiled at her vehemence.

“And I don’t want you to go. I should miss you.”

His words were balm to her conscience. She would have to stay now.

The day grew very hot. When afternoon came she stretched herself upon the bed, and lay there, not sleeping, but staring into the twilight, oppressed, restless, as if under the burden of coming storm. She wondered if Waring would arrive on the five o’clock express, and if he would come to the house that evening, and what she should wear. She told herself she would put on the plainest dress she had. Then she said she should not see him at all.

Waring, meanwhile, was looking from the windows of the Pullman upon the shimmering landscape, flying past him toward New York. Fields, valleys, hills, and at last the azure mountains had appeared in these elusive vistas. Between his eyes and the endless procession Barbara’s face was always present, the pale, sweet oval; the deep gray eyes, the sensitive mouth, the dark crown of soft hair. To love anything as beautiful as her soul could not be sin, he told himself.

The strangest scene of these strange weeks rose before him. A small bed-room in a quiet club-house on an old-fashioned New York square; his uncle lying in the narrow bed, in the peace after suffering which sometimes precedes death; the high-bred face, not unmarked by lines of a somewhat sardonic humor, turned questioningly to his.

“Richard, you’ve told me a good many things these days; you have not told me if you’re going to be married.”



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“No.”

“Are you going to let the name die with you? You are the last of the house. You should marry.”

A longing had seized the young man then to reverse the accepted order, not to hear a death-bed confession, but to confess to one about to die.

“Uncle Frederick, I do not want to marry, because I love with all my heart a married woman.”

The gray-haired man had smiled.

“You’ll get over it. It doesn’t pay. I’m glad you have no deeper reason for keeping out of marriage.”

The humorous lines came out on the face dully even from suffering. Waring, thrown back on himself, spent the rest of the day reading Thackeray aloud to the dying man.

But he had learned one lesson—that in future he must behave toward Barbara like a man of the world. He had relied too much on Hallworth’s exemptness from worldly standards in his chivalrous attendance upon Mrs. Penfold. He must protect her now not only from himself but from the criticism of the University.

In the suspended mood induced by travel this seemed easy to do; but when he stepped from the train the spirit of the place possessed him like a mistress. His resolution not to go that night to Dr. Penfold’s was already weakening.

He dressed as carefully for his call as if he were going to a dance. About nine o’clock, when the summer twilight had become warm, still night, he turned into the garden-path leading to the little house. His heart was

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beating rapidly. He looked for the shimmer of a white dress on the porch behind the vine screen.

But Barbara was not there.

Mehitabel answered his ring. He sent up his name, saying he would wait outside. In a few moments Dr. Penfold came down to him, eager with the genuine warmth of his welcome, and his desire to hear at length the reasons for Schelling's decision. Waring told him patiently all he could, his ears strained for some sound within the house which would tell him of Barbara's presence there. From the publication of the book Dr. Penfold went back to the book itself. Waring summoned all his courtesy to listen with seeming interest, but in a pause his impatience mastered him.

"How is Mrs. Penfold?" he asked abruptly.

"Quite well, thank you. We'll go over the work on the evenings that you can spare, and examine together the results I arrive at alone."

The sentence closed in on him like a trap-door.

He tormented himself with questions. Had Dr. Penfold shown her the telegram? Did she know he was there? Had something happened in his absence to shake her trust of him? Like all lovers he regarded time and space as his mortal enemies. They who tread the boundaries of the eternal have good reason to look with suspicion upon the finite.

Eleven o'clock was striking when Dr. Penfold released him from the book. As a substitute for Barbara it was monstrous. Why had she treated him so? The sphinx-like darkness of the house he was leaving gave him no answer. The dreariness of his own dwelling he had no desire to face. For weeks the tapestried story of

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David and Bathsheba on the walls of his sitting-room had made work there difficult. To quiet his spirit he set out on a long cross-country walk which lasted until the twilight of dawn. Then, thoroughly worn out, he sought his bed, and the opiate of deep, dreamless sleep.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### “THE LONELINESS OF STATELY WAYS.”

BARBARA came down to the breakfast-table looking tired. The strain of the vigil in her room during Waring's call and long after into the night had robbed the new day of all freshness. It would be hot and long like all the days to come—days arid with denial.

Her husband's munching of his toast irritated her, but she smothered her irritation, bringing to the task enough vital force to enarmor a St. Anthony.

She longed to ask about Waring; to learn if he had inquired for her; but the simple question appalled her with its Brobdingnagian quality. It would fill the room, press out the walls of the house.

At last she ventured, her voice sounding to her like the voice of some one else.

“Mr. Waring was here last night?”

“Yes; he came straight to me, like a good fellow, with his report of Schelling.”

He went on to tell her, between sips of coffee and spoonfuls of egg, the whole of the matter.

Barbara, listening, tried in vain to catch a glimpse of Waring through this thicket of business details and mathematical schemes. His strong, clear-cut face, with its beautiful eyes, seemed to have receded to a far distance.

The morning dragged. By the middle of the after-

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noon the house became a prison. She went to the study door.

“I am going down to the lake to row. I want some exercise.”

“In all this heat, my dear?”

“It will not be hot on the lake.”

The blue surface, stretching far away to the north, released her spirit. From the time of her childhood, when she had sought instinctively a hilltop as the best place on which to get over being naughty, distance had always calmed her. The labor of rowing gave an outlet to her mordant energy. She made the boat fly like a hunted thing over the calm water.

She kept to the middle of the lake, to avoid observation from the summer cottages lining the shores. Her pent-up feeling served the place of strength. When fatigue at last overcame her she had rowed eight miles or more. She rested on her oars, and, looking about her, found that she was directly opposite the opening of a deep and wide ravine whose stream emptied into the lake. She had visited it more than once, its dangers having a certain fascination for her. Midway of its length a precipice divided it, and at the sides of the waterfall thus formed the black cliffs hung sheer four hundred feet above the stream. Nor did its terrors end at the lake. She had been told that a few feet from the shore another precipice plunged down to a depth of more than a thousand feet. Over this gulf her little boat was rocking.

She leaned and gazed into the dark, impenetrable water. Bodies that went down at that point were never



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found. Did some current carry them through deep holes into the bowels of the earth? Terror seized her. What if madness should come upon her and she should jump? Grasping her oars she turned her boat and headed it for a point on the shore some distance down. Cottages were there. She longed for the sight of people, for the sound of human voices.

She found that her arms were weak and nerveless, and she must, perforce, row slowly. The boat seemed to creep along as if reluctant to leave the place.

But at last she drew near the cottages. She could see the people on the porches; in their hammocks under the trees. Her courage rose. She wondered if her nerves were in a bad way that such a silly fear should overcome her.

But she still kept close to the shore, though it added length to the home journey. For her fatigue she was grateful. It kept her from thinking.

Within two miles of the lighthouse she saw a boat approaching, a man and a woman in it. As it drew nearer her heart leaped; her hands grew cold. Waring had the oars. In the stern of the boat Mrs. Joyce perched like a white butterfly.

A pang of jealous anguish pierced her. Her first clear thought was of escape. Conscious of her fagged look, of the perspiration on her face, of her limp shirt-waist devoid of its collar and turned in at the throat, she could not bear to come into juxtaposition with Mrs. Joyce, cool and complacent in her summer afternoon bravery. She was about to head her boat for the shore again when she saw that Waring had recognized her and was plying his oars vigorously to come alongside.

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Then she drew her own oars up, and put her hands to her hair matted on her brow, and knotted her handkerchief about her throat.

“Mrs. Penfold, you certainly believe in the strenuous life,” Mrs. Joyce’s airy voice challenged her. “Are you so fond of rowing alone?”

Waring was gazing at her with a look of concern and wistfulness that hurt her, made her long to escape. She felt for her oars.

“Mrs. Penfold,” he said quietly, “come into our boat or let me fasten yours to ours. You look tired. You must have been too far.”

“I have been as far as Deepdale Ravine,” she said; “but I am not tired.”

She smiled at him, but he did not answer her smile. His face was anxious, abstracted.

“But you are tired. Twelve miles in this heat means work,” he said.

Mrs. Joyce interposed. She had no intention of having her plans for the afternoon spoiled.

“Mrs. Penfold’s pallor is very becoming. I should be a fright if I had rowed to Deepdale. You must always let a woman have her way, Dicky.”

“Indeed, I am quite able to get back,” Barbara said, already bending to her oars. The nickname had cut her like a whip across the cheek.

She smiled and nodded to them as she made good her retreat. Pride, not strength or skill, directed the clean-cut strokes. In a few moments she was out of hearing distance.

Rage filled Waring. Mrs. Joyce had met him on the main street; had demanded of him that he row her down

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to the Esmonds' cottage to make a call. Yet Barbara must think that he had deliberately invited this woman to go with him on the lake. He was so afraid that he would show his feelings that his absorption in her became every minute more elaborate. Light jest and banter and innocuous gossip passed between them. Mrs. Joyce's triumph seemed to herself complete.

Barbara, making for the lighthouse, felt as if she were dragging all the drowned after her, so heavy was the boat. Distrust of him filled her. What if he were only a clever actor who had amused himself through the winter with an unsophisticated woman? All his life he had played with romance, if Hallworth's traditionary gossip was to be trusted. Stories she had heard of him during his freshman year came back to her. There was nothing derogatory in them, chiefly amusing accounts of the efforts of undergraduates to discover the particular in the general, the personal in the impersonal, Waring's heart beneath Waring's monotonously impartial chivalry. Now these tales became significant. Had she been so young, so inexperienced, so lacking in astuteness that she interpreted a winter's courtesy to mean love? Was she so eager for romance that she caught at it as a baby chasing sunbeams? The unpardonable sin of mistaking Waring's attitude toward her swallowed up the sin of loving.

Yet she remembered certain words, certain accents of his, which seemed to claim her whether she would or no. The baptismal "Barbara," uttered in the depths of the wood, she could no more undo than a sacrament.

But the near moment obscured the past. She was

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bowed under the weight of the most tragie mistake a woman can make, a weight heavy enough to crush out even the emotion of shame.

She brought her boat to the little harbor, where other boats rocked at their moorings. Their owner, an old fisherman, looked at her as he helped her to land.

“Not to be presumin’, Mrs. Penfold, wouldn’t a cup of tea help you out before goin’ up hill? My wife’ll make you one in a minute. You look, like you’ve rowed too far.”

Barbara thanked him, but said no. She had but one thought now—to get in out of the light and heat.

Mehitabel met her with the amazing intelligence that Dr. Penfold had gone out to dine with some members of the Faculty whose wives were away. She was glad to have the house to herself. The strain of sitting through dinner had wearied her in the prospect.

The old servant, perceiving her pallor and weariness, brought her tea and fixed her bath for her. Barbara gave herself up to her ministrations gratefully. But with the first relief to the tired body the mind again began its torment. Out of her confusions one thought at last emerged. She would not be the wounded and baffled woman. For the rest of the summer, for the rest of life, perhaps, she would play the part of the great lady. She thanked God that no betraying word had ever escaped her, whatever tell-tale emotion had looked from her eyes. She should treat him with friendliness, but with dignity, making herself mistress of the art of concealment.

To act a part was to marry tragedy, but pride should sustain her. It brought her to her feet now and sent her to her mirror. The long and elaborate toilet that she



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made had one central purpose, to obliterate the ravages of the afternoon. At last she stood full-dressed, embodied summer daintiness. She had chosen a diaphanous gown of white, delicately embroidered with little white silk roses. A white rosette was in her dark hair. For her touch of color she put about her neck the turquoises which had been her husband's wedding gift. If Waring should come the gown should tell him how happy she was, and her eyes would confirm its testimony. He must know she had been happy without him, could be happy without him always.

She was almost sure that he would come. She had not long to wait. Mehitabel came up with his card, saying that he had asked for her, not Dr. Penfold.

He was standing by the fireplace in the hall when she descended the stairs. As he heard the rustle of her skirts he raised his head, and the light fell full upon his face. What she saw there made her mistrust seem for a moment monstrous; but she beat back the thought, and it was as the great lady of her intention, not as a friend, that she greeted him.

"I am very sorry Dr. Penfold is out. Some bachelor husbands carried him off to dine, by a miracle of which I am ignorant. But I presume he'll be back before long."

Waring looked at her with troubled eyes. Why should she greet him so? Her budding beauty, heightened by the festal character of her white dress, put her at a far enough distance from him without this most courteous coldness.

"I did not come to see Dr. Penfold. I came to see you," he said, adding, "did you get my letter?"



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“Yes; it came in the same mail with one from the Emperor that I laughed over; it was so characteristic of her. Shall we sit on the porch?”

She turned on the electric light which hung from the centre of the porch roof. Waring, feeling miserable, seated himself in its glare and waited for her to speak, which she did promptly.

“Tell me about your trip to New York. I hear that you have come into a fortune.”

He did not answer her smile.

“No; only a legacy. The estate proved to be very small. But all my uncle’s books and curios were left to me—things he had picked up abroad mostly. I think I shall have to have a house now to put them in.”

“At Hallworth?”

Her voice was not quite under her control, but she met his eyes bravely.

“Nowhere else.”

“I had a good time last winter,” she said airily; “but I’m afraid I should want something more after a while. You want to meet new people—see something more cosmopolitan.”

If Waring had been in a humorous mood he would have smiled—Barbara longing for the cosmopolitan! She had always seemed a child of nature to him. Yet he was not so sure, measuring her by her growth of last winter, that she would not eventually turn into a woman of the world; at the loss perhaps of what was dearest to him in her character. This new mood of hers hurt him, deepened his loneliness. He longed to break through the shining brittle barrier and ask her to be her dear, simple self; to trust him enough for that. Two principles with-

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held him—loyalty to Dr. Penfold, loyalty to silence. If he spoke he might be lost.

Barbara, like other novices, was in danger of over-acting her part. Feeling this, she attempted to steer a middle course, and landed in a swamp of commonplaces. Then she feared lest he should find her dull. She must not play the great lady at the expense of boring him.

But there was no look of such dreary issues in his face, repressed, gentle.

“Did you enjoy your row this afternoon?” she asked.

“No.”

Her castle of social art went down like a bubble before the monosyllable.

“That isn’t kind to Mrs. Joyce,” she said.

The old, sweet, childlike reproach in her voice sent a thrill through him, made him reckless.

“I do not care.”

“But you—you should say you enjoyed it.”

His smile, pleading, beautiful, imprisoned her.

“But you—you shouldn’t ask a lady to go rowing—unless you can enjoy it.”

“I didn’t ask her. She asked me.”

“She asked you?”

“Does that astonish you? You know how recklessly Mrs. Joyce bestows her favors.”

Barbara laughed, a laugh so happy that for a moment his bliss was robbed of sin.

She babbled on like a brook released by spring. She felt too happy to be conscious of wrong-doing.

“You will go for a row with me to-morrow?”

“To have you tell some one later that you didn’t enjoy it—at least you can’t say that I asked you!”

## “THE LONELINESS OF STATELY WAYS”

“If I don’t enjoy it I promise to tell no one but you.”

So they tilted, the barren land of tragedy left far behind, a fairy play-land opening before them. They would ward off danger with a laugh. Barbara was realizing that if it were not safe to be with him on the old friendly footing, it was more perilous to shut him out of her life. To be unhappy, to know such misery as had closed in upon her that afternoon, to know the loneliness of stately ways, was to come too near to sin.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### “THE PROTECTION OF JOY.”

BOTH committed themselves to the protection of joy.

To Barbara the days that followed were dreamlike. She awoke each morning with new and charming thoughts of life, with keener capacity for worship, with human longings more tender. She loved the whole universe and blessed God for her existence.

Waring refused to think at all, giving himself up to the first deep emotion of his life. That he might pay the debt later was an affair of to-morrow. Like the great saints, the great sinners, he lived in the present, dividing his days between work and love. Dr. Penfold, under the full fascination of his new labors, sometimes remained at his desk until the dawn stole in. Waring shared these vigils, conscious always of Barbara's presence in the house, and going home at last through the early light half-dazed with this union of romance and severe intellectual labor.

They were seldom alone together, but this very privation satisfied conscience for the time being. Both went through these brilliant summer days softly, lest they should waken something sleeping.

Barbara believed herself to be living on the heights, in a kind of superhuman exemptness from the more earthly phases of love. To her quickened imagination the medieval tales of chivalry now seemed possible; the knight serving his lady with remote but none the less

## “THE PROTECTION OF JOY”

fervent devotion; she a habitant of the spiritual plane, “enskyed and sainted.”

Her awakening from this impossible dream came through the medium of a gift from Waring, the Celtic poet in a dress of white vellum, with shamrock leaves curiously interwoven about the title. Within was her own name in quaint lettering, surrounded by a wreath of ivy and violets, delicately hand-painted—a sumptuous present, eloquent in every detail of its significance to her alone. He had slipped it into her hand as she passed him in the hall, hurrying on lest she should thank him.

At the first opportunity she had taken it to her husband, showing it to him as Waring’s gift, and conscientiously drawing attention to its beauties.

“You see the little wreath inside is hand-painted,” she had said, resolute in exposing its full preciousness.

“Why, that’s a beautiful little book,” her husband commented. “Some day, my dear, when I have a moment, you must introduce me to its contents. I know little of modern poetry.”

Then he had turned to his work. Barbara, her duty done, carried the book away to her room, and pored over the poems they had read together. It was scarcely out of her hands that day. She went to sleep that night with her cheek against it.

She awoke in the early dawn, her hands groping for it, her heart heavy. The little gift, so personal in every detail, had broken the spell of her deliberate and wilful innocence. She could be innocent no longer.

She lay quiet for a while, the book pressed against her breast. Then horror of her thoughts seized her.



## THE LAW OF LIFE

Rising, she knelt by the bed, praying without words, calling upon far-away heaven to keep her from the grasp of earth. The idealism in which she had felt herself so safe had become an invisible bridge over a bottomless gulf. The rectitude of her ancestors, which, descending to her, had made her as a girl face the bleakness of an unexplained universe, now made her face the fact that she wanted not his soul alone, but his lips, his touch.

As she knelt, shivering, she heard the sound of dragging voices in the next room, as of two people tired out, but still in the clutch of a difficulty which like a ghost must be laid before morning. Waring was still there! Would they kill him between them, her husband with the never-ending labor, she with her restless soul!

On her knees she resolved to write that day to the Emperor, to tell her that she had changed her mind, and would go to Maine for the rest of the summer.

Her resolution calmed her. Her thought went back to him to say farewell. Seated in her window, hidden by the white curtains, she watched for his departure. His book lay on her knees. She heard him leave the house, saw him go slowly along the deserted walk, his head bowed, as if he were lost in thought. He seemed unaware of the morning world about him.

A few hours later she was sitting on the porch, a pretence of work in her hands, the book on a table by her. Nine o'clock was striking from the bell-tower across the campus, but centuries seemed to have elapsed since that morning prayer which had all the confusions of midnight in it.

Up-stairs Dr. Penfold was sleeping peacefully. She could hear Mehitabel moving about the house, droning

## “THE PROTECTION OF JOY”

an endless song in the minor key. In the distance summer-school students were hurrying to lectures.

Waring's work came in the afternoon. She could not hope to see him until evening. Then she must bid him good-by.

She took up the little book. It must never lie upon her heart again. It was too much his.

She turned the pages with lingering finger-tips. Ivy and violets—the penitential flower and the immemorial vine—enwreathing her name. What did he mean by these symbols—renunciation, eternal love?

A familiar step on the garden-path sent the blood to her heart. He was coming up the path, a gallant figure in irreproachable summer costume. But the gallantry was in his dress and bearing, not in his white, tired face.

His eyes lighted when he saw the book in her hands.

“Why aren't you in your bed?” she said, fearful lest her voice should tremble. “Mehitabel tells me you were cruelly kept here until after three.”

He smiled.

“What was the use of going to bed? The morning tempted me, so I went for a walk and a plunge in the upper stream. Then I felt made over.”

“How long can you keep up such strenuousness?”

“Oh, the work is nothing. These are the things I mind.”

He handed her a letter. It was from a Mrs. Leverett, of New York, evidently an old friend. She announced that she and her daughter would stop at Sparta for a week on their way to Canada. “And Alice hopes that ‘Cousin Richard’ will not be too formidable,

## THE LAW OF LIFE

too learned. Remember, my baby is just out of a Paris convent, and not at all able to hold her own with the women who go to an American university. But she is anxious to see Hallwörth. You will be good to us?"

The thick paper, the elaborate monogram, the handwriting suggested strangeness and richness—richness less of possessions, perhaps, than of temperament. Barbara, whipping down her jealousy of the unknown, looked up at Waring with an inquiring smile.

"Mrs. Leverett is an old friend of my father's who has always been good enough to take an interest in me. The daughter, Alice, was in the nursery when I last saw her—a pretty little thing. Mrs. Leverett's an out-and-out society woman, but kind-hearted, genuine." He paused. "I confess the prospect of entertaining them for a week rather appals me."

"It is hard on you with all your work. My—Dr. Penfold must let you off from that wretched book. Have you made any plans?"

"I'll show them the University—then the country 'round, the lake, the ravines, all the rest of it. Could I—would you—could I depend on you to help me a little?"

Her resolution faced her, but the appeal in his voice was irresistible.

A week later Mrs. Joyce hailed her on the campus, waving a pink beruffled parasol like an audacious rose.

"Have you met the visitors?" she said gaily. "Dicky's friends?"

"No, I have not," Barbara answered, looking her

## “THE PROTECTION OF JOY”

in the eyes. “I was to have called on them yesterday, but Mehitabel was suddenly taken ill, and I stayed home to cook the dinner.”

“You poor youngster! Why didn’t you send for me? I’d have made Dr. Penfold a soup that would have started divorce proceedings.”

She had been amiable of late to Barbara, convinced that Waring could never lose his heart to a woman ignorant of the very alphabet of enchantment.

“But I’m going on the picnic to-night if Mehitabel is better.”

“You must. I want you to see that girl. She’d appeal to you with your artistic sense. She has one of those pale, oval faces, framed in hair really gold and drawn down over her ears *à la* Merode. She looks like a Madonna, but her eyes betray her.”

“Why?”

“They are full of witchery—and she knows how to use them. I am insanely jealous. Herbert has lost his heart to her.”

She rattled on maliciously, watching Barbara as a cat would a mouse. Barbara, quite conscious of the scrutiny and of the steel under the velvet, acted with new skill. These months of repressed pain had taught her how to wear a mask.

When Mrs. Joyce had left her she went on her way, wretched, yet ashamed of her wretchedness. Two selves seemed always present in her—the self who felt and acted; the self who stood apart and criticized feeling and action. As the book had revealed to this second self the fact that her love was not the ideal, supernal emotion she wished it to be, so the coming of Waring’s



## THE LAW OF LIFE

friends had shown her her very human limitations. She could not hide from herself that she was jealous.

She was impatient to see this girl, just out of the atmosphere of a convent; yet bearing about her, if Mrs. Joyce was to be trusted, something of the charm of the gayest city in the world. Waring's devotion to herself these days, restrained, yet significant in every slightest word and look, had only slightly assuaged the pain of her prospective jealousy.

The girl was indeed lovely in appearance! Barbara's beauty-loving nature did homage to her. Even under the searching light of the afternoon sun, the face beneath the picture-hat was like a flower, with its delicate contours and soft tints. For the rest she was—Paris! Every line of the perfectly simple gown betrayed it.

The mother was a fair and comfortable dowager, smiling under her white parasol, and evidently very fond of Waring. Little silver things jingled as she walked. An expensive odor of violet clung about her. Her fine, well-corseted figure dominated any group of which she formed a part.

They had all assembled at the boat-landing. Allaire and Dutton were of the party, and most of the eligible younger set in the Faculty. Waring had chartered a steamboat. They were to go about thirty miles, landing at one of the large hotels for supper, and perhaps a little dance. The return would be by moonlight.

Once on the lake, Barbara found herself near Mrs. Leverett. From polite questions concerning that lady's impressions of Hallworth, she obtained not only the obvious answers but a voluntary recital of the whole of



## “THE PROTECTION OF JOY”

Waring's existence before his arrival as a freshman at the University. He had chosen Hallworth, Mrs. Lev-  
erett said, against his father's wishes and in preference  
to Harvard, because Hallworth was more democratic.  
But, as for that, there had never been much sympathy  
between father and son. The sternness and aloofness  
of the elder Richard Waring seemed to have dated from  
the hour when the young mother, a Southern girl, died,  
leaving her new-born baby.

“We were neighbors, and I used to have Richard  
in to play in my children's nursery. His own was bare  
enough, and his nurse, a Scotch woman, talked to him  
about the Day of Judgment when he could just toddle.  
He used to ask me—poor lamb—if I was quite sure he  
was predestined to eternal life.”

She talked on and on, Barbara listening with an  
ache of jealousy that this woman should have been so  
close to Richard; should know so much more than she  
knew. But she smiled and drew her out, keeping her  
eyes on her pleasant, matronly face lest she should see  
Waring bending over Alice. That they were together  
she knew. The mother had quite obviously turned her  
over to him at the beginning of the trip, cautioning him  
to see that the child had enough wraps.

Had she match-making intentions in bringing her  
daughter to Hallworth? Did she foresee a brilliant  
career for Waring? He was nearly thirty, twelve years  
older than the girl, but that was rather an advantage.  
Barbara put the question in every pitiless light.

Dutton and Allaire came for her after a while to  
point out something on the shore to her. Allaire  
slipped a hand in hers and held it tightly.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

"I've been talking to the little lady from Paris," she said. "She is dainty, but I think her heart must be just like a piece of sweet wet soap."

The odd words took the strain out of things. Barbara laughed. For the rest of the trip she sat with them. The boat was too small for pairing off, so her conscience was clear. Dutton and Allaire were wholesome persons to be with.

She managed to evade Waring after they landed, but at supper-time she found he had placed her at his left, with Mrs. Leverett opposite. She joined in the talk gaily, sometimes addressing him, but never meeting his eyes. She saw that the matron's familiar, reminiscent conversation did not put him wholly at his ease. He seemed afraid of its personal element. Once Mrs. Leverett, leaning forward, asked her confidentially:

"Don't you think Mr. Waring looks very much run down?"

"He is an indefatigable worker," Barbara answered, smiling.

"You are a very good friend of his, he tells me. You shouldn't let him overwork. These unmarried men are such uncared-for creatures. When are you going to be sensible—and marry, Richard?"

He laughed.

"Oh, I shall never marry!"

Mrs. Leverett gave Barbara a look, implying mutual matronly understanding.

"They all say that—don't they? I brought you up, Richard; I shall not feel that my duty is done until you are married."

## “THE PROTECTION OF JOY”

“Will you pick out the girl for me?” he said lightly.

“Oh, no. I’ll do everything but that, though I have my theories. What kind of a woman do you think he ought to marry, Mrs. Penfold?”

Barbara felt the flush mount to her forehead.

“I haven’t even theories,” she said with a smile.

Waring did not look at her.

On the home journey he sat with Mrs. Leverett, but toward the end of it he made his way to the place where Barbara was. The man beside her rose. He took his seat without a word.

His face in the moonlight was tired and careworn. She began to talk of one thing and another, to cover up the silence that she feared. Conflicting feelings had left her at the mercy of herself.

He answered her in monosyllables, checking with his eyes her attempt at indifferent conversation. The atmosphere seemed surcharged with his emotion.

Fear of she knew not what overcame her desire to be with him. She rose abruptly.

“I must find Allaire. She left her coat with me and it is getting cold.”

“Barbara, don’t go.”

He rose, standing between her and the passage. His love was in his face.

“I—I must,” she faltered, pushing past him, her hand for an instant across her eyes, blinded with that look.

She reached home a little after midnight. Her husband’s study door was closed. She did not knock upon it. He was probably farther away than Saturn.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

A low light was burning in her room. On a chair before her dressing-table lay a large wooden box, big enough for a child's coffin. Bending over it she saw, with the express labels, the card of a New York florist. Mehitabel had evidently removed the nails from the lid, for it yielded at her touch. Raising it she saw lying in a bed of moss a mass of crimson. She put her arms in and gathered them to her breast, more roses than she could count; more roses than she had ever had in her life before.

She sank on her knees by the chair, burying her face in them, intoxicated with their fragrance—with more than their fragrance.

She knelt a long time motionless. Once she pressed her lips against the flowery mass.

She knew now that she must go.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### IN EXILE.

WARING came early to the house the next evening, hoping to have a few moments with Barbara before beginning work. Her avoidance of him on the boat-ride, while appealing to his nobler purpose, awoke the inevitable desire of conquest in the face of difficulties. He should protect her, yes; every law of honor and chivalry demanded that, but she must first be his to protect.

Mehitabel came to the door.

"Is Dr. Penfold in his study?"

"Yes, Mr. Waring."

"Is—is Mrs. Penfold in?"

"She left this afternoon for Maine."

Waring was too astonished to say a word. He turned a blank face to Mehitabel, who, unconscious of the shock she had given him, went on cheerfully.

"She made up her mind all of a sudden. I helped her pack most of the morning. The Doctor he wanted her to wait a day and take it more slow; but she seemed to have set her heart on goin', and I was glad of it. She'd run down sure in this heat."

Waring nodded.

"Yes," he said dully, "Mrs. Penfold will be the better for the change."

"You look sort o' peaked yourself, sir," Mehitabel said, with motherly solicitation. "Don't let him work you too hard," she added, in the tone of a conspirator.



## THE LAW OF LIFE

“He ain’t like other men. You couldn’t wear him out. But you ain’t toughened yet.”

Waring smiled faintly.

“Thank you, Mehitabel, but I’m taking good care of myself.”

He went slowly up-stairs, weighed down with disappointment, with self-accusation. He told himself that he had driven her away. The book, prepared with such elaborate care; the roses, what had they been but confessions of his love! Longing for her struggled with remorse.

At the study door he paused, unable to face the dreariness that awaited him. In that instant the remainder of the summer passed before him, exaggerated in time, suffocatingly empty. How could he go on with the book and with his duties in the summer-school! Even the few days left of Mrs. Leverett’s visit took on an eternal and hopeless character.

Dr. Penfold greeted him with a pleased smile.

“Richard, I’ve found out where we went wrong last Wednesday in that algebraic calculation. This is the key to the formula.”

He pushed a paper across the desk. Waring bent unseeing eyes over it.

“Mehitabel tells me that Mrs. Penfold is gone to Maine.”

“Yes, very suddenly. I’m glad she’ll have a change. You see what I mean there. How we both came to make such a mistake I can’t conceive!”

They were soon hard at work.

Visions of her possessed him as he bent over the desk, his features drawn with pain, his tired eyes scarcely

## IN EXILE

seeing the rows of figures before him. How could he go on?

Toward midnight he rose.

“Doctor, I’ll have to quit. I’m substituting for Williams to-morrow in addition to my work.”

Dr. Penfold nodded, too busy even to answer.

The Emperor showed no surprise over Barbara’s coming. She scarcely needed her friend’s worn face and repressed manner to tell her that the trip was in reality a flight. Knowing how dangerous bodily weakness is when the emotions are at the superlative point, she devoted herself to the physical re-enforcement of her friend, keeping her many hours in the open air, making her eat, sending her out sailing with Elizabeth and Elizabeth’s friends.

A certain apathy succeeding the storm which drove her from her husband’s house made her plastic in the Emperor’s hands.

Concerning her inner life she said nothing. She was not confidential by nature. In any case love and silence had become synonymous. There was but one person in the world whom she could tell, and from him she had fled.

She was curiously indifferent to the glory of sea and sky, the ever-changing picture spread out each day before her. It was beautiful, it was all that the Emperor had said, but she did not care.

Elizabeth, full of her own happiness, yet not blinded by it to the moods of others, watched her with friendly concern. One day, when they were together on the rocks, she reached her hand out and touched Barbara’s gently.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

"Dear, you are not happy?"

"That is true."

"Can I do anything?"

"No."

"If there is ever anything that I can do will you let me do it?"

"Yes," Barbara said, her troubled eyes gazing far out to sea. Then the thought came to her that she might be hurting Elizabeth. She turned to her.

"Dear, you are good. I'm not. Don't bother about me."

"I can't help it. You know I care for you."

"Go on caring if you can!"

"That is too easy. Ask something harder."

Barbara smiled, holding her friend's hand with the comfort she did not always feel in the Emperor's presence. Elizabeth was more restful, because her perceptions were not so keen.

That night Elizabeth sought Helena.

"Do you know what is the matter with Barbara?"

"How should I? She has never told me."

"There's something the matter with her—she's so unlike herself. I wish we could help her!"

"In the last analysis—whatever the trouble is—no one can help her but herself," the Emperor said brusquely.

Elizabeth's gentle eyes looked reproach.

"We could help her to help herself, couldn't we?"

"Aren't we rather impertinent to presume she stands in need of us? Go to bed, you walking piece of senti-

## IN EXILE

ment! Romance has impaired your judgment," and, kissing her, she put her out of the room.

But the Emperor sat long by her window, staring out over the moonlit ocean. Barbara would have to go back. What would become of them then?

Mehitabel wrote weekly to her mistress of the affairs of the household. Dr. Penfold had written once, a letter over which Barbara smiled in spite of herself. It had evidently been penned at intervals, and continuity there was none. The signature was missing.

The letters of Mehitabel were more satisfactory, though Barbara had to search for the news she wanted through a thicket of detail concerning the manufacture of blackberry brandy; the successful trapping of a farmer in a lie, and sundry encounters with a hypocritical grocer, between whom and Mehitabel there had been a feud of long standing. After the elaborate accounts came the meager information that "Dr. Penfold was doing nicely. He and Mr. Waring were still working dreadfully hard."

What Barbara longed to know was the date of Waring's departure from Hallworth. The summer-school closed on the fifteenth of August. Would he remain afterward to work on the book? It was to be ready by the first of September. She thought he would probably remain. She did not wish to leave until she was sure he was out of Hallworth.

She was growing stronger in spite of her destroying inner life. The sea-air was bringing color to her cheeks, a clearer light to her eyes. But this influx of physical

## THE LAW OF LIFE

energy, breaking up her apathy, replaced it with suffering. The longing for the sight of Waring's face, for the sound of his voice, drove her some days like a hunted thing along the stretches of beach, or through the pine-forests.

She was afraid to write and ask her husband definitely how soon the book would be finished, and whether Waring would remain after the summer-school. She decided at last that she would start home on the second of September, not sending word beforehand, lest, if he were still there, he might be tempted to stay.

The weeks dragged by. September came. Then, to make quite sure, she still delayed her going three or four days.

On the sixth she started for home, the Emperor traveling with her part of the way. The last of the journey was made by night. In the early morning she landed at Sparta. The towers of Hallworth were dark against the glowing eastern sky.

Mehitabel met her at the door, drew her in greedily, babbled over her, flew to get her breakfast. Dr. Penfold, she said, had gone to bed like a Christian the night before, would therefore be down soon no doubt.

He did come down while Barbara was sitting there, half-dazed with the joy and misery of getting back. His face lit up at the sight of her. He took her in his arms and kissed her on both cheeks.

"Well, you have surprised me! How well you are looking! You did right to go away!"

"And the book?"



## IN EXILE

“The book is finished, thank God!—and you’re back. Now I’ll take my vacation—with you.”

“And—and Mr. Waring?”

“Richard left for New York last night.”

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### TWO LOVERS.

SHE spent the morning unpacking, putting her things in order, stopping once or twice to talk with her husband, who was carrying out his idea of a vacation—to smoke a good cigar under his own porch roof, with one of the English reviews on his knee. He asked her kindly questions about her trip, and said more than once that he was glad to have her back. She smiled bravely and told him of the beauties of the Maine coast, showing him some photographs the Emperor had made. Then when she saw him fingering the pages of the review she slipped away to her room, that he might read with a clear conscience.

As long as she kept busy she was comparatively safe; but after lunch, in the summer stillness that settled upon the house, misery possessed her. Dr. Penfold had gone to the library; Mehitabel was at her endless, self-imposed labors. Outside the September sun was beating down upon the dry, brown grass and the dusty walks. The neighboring houses were closed. That most prosaic of all afternoon hours, two o'clock, was striking.

She shivered in the close, lifeless air. She could not bear it. She must go out.

Far away on the other side of the ravine, across the fields, beyond the woods, was a little knoll, where no one ever came; where everything ended and nothing began, an edge of the world in miniature, overlooking the lake

## TWO LOVERS

and receiving its breezes. She and Waring had discovered it.

To this place she had bent her steps. The last time she had gone there he had been with her.

She scarcely knew that she was suffering. Pain had become her constant companion. She wondered sometimes if it would wear itself out, like physical anguish. But for the body there were narcotics.

She reached her goal. The view from it, long, narrow, embracing only the lake and its enclosing hills, she had seen last in the spring, when the green world dripped with dew.

Now the fields were brown and dry, the lake thick and metallic under the hot sun. The grass, scorched and glassy, made her step cautiously on the rounding surface of the knoll. At the summit she paused, leaning against a tall, ragged pine, under which he had once read the "Epipsychidion" to her.

If the indoor stillness had weighed upon her, this quiet of a dying world—dying of suffocation, it would seem—held still greater oppression. She was afraid of herself, of a pain that she could neither assuage nor endure. She raised her face to the glowing heaven beyond the branches of the pine-tree and prayed that she might die. Every outlet of life seemed closed to her, since all roads led to him. At the end of every hope, every enthusiasm, every new thought, every illuminating emotion, he was waiting for her.

She could not bear this solitude. She must go back to the house from which she had fled. But as she turned the sound of footsteps made her pause. Some one was passing through the lonely wood back of the knoll. Not

## THE LAW OF LIFE

wishing to be seen, she stepped back, and leaned against the pine-tree.

Whoever it was was coming toward her.

“Barbara!”

Had she died! Close beside her stood Waring, looking himself like one raised from the dead, his face bending to her, transfigured with surprise and joy.

The shock, the bliss of seeing him whom she believed far away produced upon her the effect of a heavy blow. She swayed and slipped upon the smooth grass.

As she slipped he caught her, held her. In agony she pressed her cheek against his breast. He kissed her hair, her eyes, her lips.

“Barbara! help me!”

His voice, harsh with pain, told her that she lived. Her palms against his breast pushed him from her, held him at arm’s length. She covered her face with her hands; stood there, motionless, silent.

“I have struggled so!” he cried. “Before God, I did not know you were here. I thought you still in Maine. I was to have gone last night—I couldn’t—Barbara, speak to me—only speak to me!”

“Go, Richard; go, go now!”

The appeal in her voice stilled his soul to instant obedience; but the sweetness of his name on her lips held him tragically enchanted.

She had turned her face away that she might not see him go. She waited; then looked toward him again.

He was standing against the tree, straight, motionless as a statue, his lips pressed closely together, all the life of him in the misery of his gaze.

Slowly, deliberately she went toward him, her face

## TWO LOVERS

blanched with the realization of what she was doing. He opened his arms to receive her, took her in them, held her with the rigid grasp of the drowned. She put her hands behind his head and drew his face down. Then freeing herself, uttering an incoherent cry, she ran from him, through the wood, toward the open field.





**BOOK FOURTH**

**THE LAW OF LIFE**

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## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### PERDITA INTERVENES.

THE lectures on "German Literature" by the learned Teuton—said to eat with his knife—were attracting not only the students of Hallworth but even those women who, in self-defence, made the most conscientious efforts to resist the peculiar influence of their environment. Mrs. Joyce and Perdita Ravenel both belonged to this minority, though for widely different reasons. The one had married learning; the other had been all her life pursued by it, her desperate efforts to escape being generally made good by the flashes of her wit, which illumined the academic fog. To the provincialism of the higher culture she opposed the cosmopolitan feminine.

One November morning she and Mrs. Joyce were seated together in the rear of the lecture-room among the visiting audience, chiefly women, a contingent known to irreverent students as "thirsters." But on this occasion the young things themselves were eagerly drinking in the words of the impassioned German, who, with a strange, jumbled, yet effective oratory, was compelling their spirits to feel something of the storm and stress of a bygone, overburdened age.

Perdita, listening to the deep, guttural voice delivering its message of truth, as once conceived by young hearts of the Fatherland, wondered why youthful Americans never—apparently—saw visions nor dreamed dreams; were never rapt out of themselves by some high enthusiasm, some all-illuminating romance of life or art;

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why they seldom took themselves seriously; why a pig-skin meant more to them than the problems of the universe; why no storm and stress ever shook their natures to the foundations? Were they shallow? Was their sense of humor too keen? Was life made too easy for them? Were they spiritual bastards, because born of a society without traditions? Was it better, after all, to come out of the bosom of that Old World where people had not at least lost the art of taking pleasure in little things?

All these questions went through her mind as she listened to the recital of long-stilled heart-throbs. This unhewn German doctor, with his stained coat, his aspiring hair, his round, moon face and near-sighted eyes, stood as a sympathetic interpreter of romance—more!—was invoking romance from the grave of the years. What beautiful sentiments they had had, these youths of the bared throats and careless neckties; how easily they wept! How dramatically they suffered! With what naive confidence they tilted against the Metternichian Eighteenth Century! How calm their belief in the angel-origin of ringleted woman! How they dripped with sentiment when they loved, and how frequently they fell in love, dear, impossible creatures! Perhaps this learned doctor, stooping under the weight of all he knew, and all he wanted to know, was descended from one of them. Perdita wondered if any woman had ever loved him. Studying him, she concluded that he might be married; but his wife could only have reached her place at his side by the road of the Teutonic idea of woman's destiny.

As she left the lecture-room she said a few words of



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appreciation in German to the lecturer, who was wiping his perspiring brow with an unbleached handkerchief, suggestive of homely virtues. He gave a grunt of acknowledgment, and Perdita passed on, smiling. At the door Mrs. Joyce slipped an arm through hers.

"What did you say to him? He looked as if he wanted to eat you."

"I only told him how much I had enjoyed his lecture."

"He told Herbert he abominated 'de vimmen in de lecture-room,' so I go just to torment him. Did you think I was thirsting?"

"No, dear," Perdita said sweetly.

"He knows how though, doesn't he? He gave me a little thrill up my spine once. I should like to have lived in Germany in the eighteenth century and had an American soul. How I would have overworked their tear-ducts! The whole storm and stress movement would have centered in me."

Perdita laughed. She was still amused over her felicitation of the Teuton and its reception.

"These modern men are perfectly impossible as lovers—cold, calculating things! I accepted Herbert on the day he got his doctorate, and I've always thought the academic event filled him with greater joy. But there's one man in this Faculty who has a storm and stress soul, though he buttons it up pretty tight—that's Richard Waring."

"Do you think so?" Perdita said, with the air of one in search of information.

"I certainly do. I hope Mrs. Penfold will be more discreet this year."

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"What do you mean, Phyllis?" Perdita said coldly.

"Now, don't look aloof and inscrutable, dear lady. You know well enough what I mean."

"If you're implying that Mrs. Penfold was not discreet last year, I should like to know your grounds."

"You will certainly admit, Perdita, that if anybody but Mrs. Penfold had been seen everywhere with Dicky Waring she'd have been well talked about. She hasn't escaped it as it is."

"I've heard nothing."

"Of course you haven't, because you won't let gossip come within a mile of you, you haughty lady. Come back of the library. I want to talk to you."

"If it's of this subject I don't want to listen."

"Don't be alarmed. Only I can't allow you to be illogical. You'll admit that Richard Waring was with Mrs. Penfold morning, noon and night last year."

"As I was not an inmate of Dr. Penfold's house, I don't admit it!"

"That's simply beating around the bush. You know they were together at all the functions."

"I saw them together at some of them, yes; but I happen to know that it was Dr. Penfold's wish that Mr. Waring should look after his wife a little. In any case it was only courteous to a woman situated as Mrs. Penfold is. Her husband never goes out, never did go out, as you know well enough, Phyllis. You've lived here ten years."

"That's all very well. But there was nothing going on in the summer-time, and Mr. Waring was there constantly."

"He was helping Dr. Penfold with that book."

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Mrs. Joyce raised her expressive brows.

“And—Barbara was away nearly two months.”

Mrs. Joyce gave a gesture of impatience.

“That is neither here nor there. There’s gossip going about—and their very actions give some color to it; they are plainly avoiding each other. They didn’t dance once together at the first Military. I think,” she added caustically, “that demure Mrs. Penfold is quite capable of arousing storm and stress. For that very reason I hope she’ll be more discreet this year. Every one would blame her—not Dicky—and of course, being one of us, we wouldn’t want this gossip to go too far.”

“Of course not,” Perdita said, with a faint note of satire, “so by way of showing our friendship we get together and talk her over.”

“Don’t be horrid, Perdita—but these quiet women can do anything. Now if I——”

Perdita laughed in spite of herself.

“People don’t believe you capable of deep feeling, so you can do what you choose. Every one knows that Barbara Penfold belongs to the type of women who take life seriously.”

“Yes—and they are most misleading.”

Perdita suddenly faced Mrs. Joyce.

“Are you her friend—or are you not, Phyllis?”

“I want to be her friend, of course. But she is such an icicle—to me!”

“Then stand up for her!”

“I have heard things—whispers—surmises. You know what this campus is.”

“Whatever you have heard—kill it. True or not, defend her as you would your own sister.”

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Her light, indifferent manner had fallen from her. Her curious eyes had a strange light in them. Perdita, appealing, was not to be resisted, even by a woman. Phyllis Joyce looked at her with frank admiration.

"Why do you take such an interest in Mrs. Penfold? You are antipodal."

"It is not personal."

"What is it?"

"*Esprit de corps*, I suppose. What you should have, Phyllis."

"You mean I've got to defend every one that's connected remotely with this horrid University?"

Perdita smiled.

"You know well enough what I mean—to use your own phrase," she said, rising, and added, "I have an engagement at twelve."

"And Herbert is bringing some bore home to lunch. The new instructors are perfectly hopeless. The one in Herbert's department has a deaf mother. I called on her yesterday, and my throat is hoarse yet from yelling through her ear-trumpet. Good-by, dear. Pray for me."

Perdita went on to Stafford Hall, deeply absorbed in her thoughts. The whole of the winter before she had watched Barbara and Waring with an intentness born of her genuine interest in both of them. Ever since the night when Barbara, pain-bewildered, had sought her with a child's directness of appeal, she had felt for her a certain tenderness which in its essence was a desire to protect. She herself, so well able to stand alone, had always drawn others to her. The secret of her fascination for men and women alike was the power lent her



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by crushed emotion. She had the art to perfection of refraining from her own temperament—a tempting one in its sensitiveness to hidden currents of human feeling. The joys of rejection, fitting in so well with that pride which was the very marrow of her being, were known to her in their fulness. Besides, if you abandoned yourself to emotion you were sure to grow clumsy! But Barbara! Here was a soul whose divine awkwardness she might well envy. The child whose eyes had softened, had lost their misery, at the reading of the “Princess and the Wild Swans,” must be always wandering in search of the ideal—and perhaps stumbling.

Well! she would seek to save her, if she could, from the strife of tongues. But how? The mere negative rôle of opposing her silence, her delicate disdain of gossip to whispers, did not appeal to her. Her dramatic sense demanded action.

That Waring and Barbara were in a dangerous situation was a matter of course. Only the highly sublimated environment of a university had made their winter possible. But even academic exemptness had its limits. The time might be coming when they should need their friends.

The problem offered but one solution possible at once to Perdita’s generosity and to her sense of humor. Men had always made love to her, in spite of her delightful invitations to them to accompany her into the pleasant and temperate zone of friendship. Why not reverse situations for once? The winter offered few prospects of amusement. Why not divert attention from Barbara by deliberately wooing Waring?

The novelty of the experiment appealed to her. She



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was perfectly sure that she should get no emotional response from him; but she counted on the response of his courtesy. Besides, it was always stimulating to play at romance with the illuminated.

She was already planning her campaign, which began with a little dinner, to which the President and Waring should be invited, with perhaps some woman who did not possess the sixth sense. Perdita divided her world into those who were harmless and those who were not. The harmless had only five senses.

If she could be seen with Waring at the functions, dance with him, go perhaps to a concert or a play with him, take walks with him on the frequented forest road, might she not draw to herself and render innocuous the gossip which, descending upon another, might inflict mortal injury?

That Barbara and Waring were in love with each other she was perfectly sure. The little scene in the picture-gallery at Mrs. Maturin's had supplied the place of a three-volumed novel. A crisis was inevitable. Until the tyranny of their emotions was overpast she was determined to continue her wooing of the hero. A prophetic smile was on her lips at the thought of his martyr-courtesy to her. She would summon all her wit, all her charm, all the friendliness she knew how to make so enchanting, to alleviate the ennui he would have to suffer.

She found the President in her drawing-room. He had sought her so often of late that had he been any one but his sardonic self she would have thought his attentions betrayed personal preference.

As she entered he was examining a candlestick of

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majolica in the shape of a lotus-flower. Melampus was emphasizing the frivolity of the furniture by his position in the centre of a Louis Quinze sofa.

“Where did you pick this up?”

“At a private factory near Florence—only open to Americans—and their purses.”

“It’s a pretty trifle. Get down, Melampus. You are out of place on brocade.”

“No, let him stay,” Perdita said, seating herself beside the dog and laying her hand on the great head. “How is your acquaintance with the Greek classics coming on, lamb?—or does your master still torment you with Latin?”

“We read the ‘Clouds’ last night.”

“You must give him a degree in June.”

The President was going through a bundle of letters which he had drawn from an inner pocket. He found at last the one he wanted and handed it to Perdita without a word. She opened it, glancing at the engraved heading.

“Have you invested in this trust?”

“No. Rebbor does us the honor of wishing to invest some of his capital in Hallworth.”

“Not the outrageous John Rebbor?”

“Read the letter.”

She glanced over it, then looked up, a slight flush in her cheeks.

“What astounding——”

“Impertinence? Well, yes, it is that—viewed in one light—in another, it seems a desperate longing to rehabilitate himself by good works. Do you think we ought to give him the chance?”

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“Do you mean let him buy a trusteeship of Hallworth with this prospective gift of three millions? No, I don’t—think how the money was made!”

The President shrugged his shoulders.

“But isn’t this trust the wickedest thing in the country?”

The President smiled. Perdita’s rare lapses into girlishness always delighted him.

“Dear lady, John Hallworth himself could not have stood out against the business methods of to-day! Evil? Yes, perhaps, but capable of bringing forth good. Think what three millions would mean to this University. We could have the new observatory, the art museum. As trustee, this gift would be but the beginning of gifts.”

Perdita smiled.

“A trust as the ultimate promoter of sweetness and light appeals to one’s sense of humor. Isn’t this—this Rebbor illiterate? What right has he to a trusteeship?”

“There you’re quite wrong. We don’t want scholars for trustees; we want keen business men. Rebbor is a financial genius. Imagine the business affairs of the University in the hands of Dr. Penfold!”

“Well, are you going to accept his offer?”

Dr. Hunt had a horror of point-blank questions. Perdita so seldom asked them that her doing so on this occasion betrayed a perfect fog of feminine bewilderment and prejudice. Yet it did not displease him. He was beginning to find her femininity almost as alluring as an idyl of Theocritus.

“I have invited this colossal menace to the country to spend Sunday with me. I thought it well to have a personal acquaintance with him before performing my

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duty of presenting his offer to the trustees and Faculty."

"I wonder why he chose Hallworth for his benefactions?"

"Did you overlook that? He writes he was a poor boy himself once. I suppose he thinks the University a kind of Christ's Hospital."

Perdita fingered Melampus's stumpy ears.

"What a mania these capitalists have for liaisons with the higher education, corrupting universities with big gifts."

"I did not know you were such a socialist."

"I am not a socialist, I am an aristocrat," Perdita said, smiling.

"But the aristocracy perishes without wealth. What power has a landless English gentleman?"

"The power of gentle ideals."

The President raised his eyebrows.

"'The meek shall inherit the earth'? Some other earth, perhaps, but not this. Will you do me the honor to meet John Rebbor? As a strictly American product, I think he might interest you."

An idea occurred to Perdita. Why not include in the dinner she had planned for Waring the President's guest? The combination held out large promises of entertainment. It would be an unsurpassed study in contrasts—Waring, the University product, the idealist, the socialist, the seer of visions, self-abandoned always to romance in some form or other, in juxtaposition with this hard-headed capitalist, who had ruined hundreds of homes, and who now wished to wed a university with a

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little dowry of three millions, a drop from the bottomless bucket.

“Can’t you and he dine with me Sunday night?”

“Yes, if you don’t make it a dinner-party. He wrote me—to quote his own words—that he was not much of a hand for meeting people; which being interpreted means, I suppose, that he is prejudiced against social functions.”

Perdita laughed.

“Six wouldn’t frighten him! Mr. and Mrs. Sordello and Mr. Waring.”

“Do you think Mr. Waring——?” He hesitated.

“That’s just the point. It would be a delicious combination.”

Dr. Hunt laughed.

“Certainly antipodal.” He rose. “Come, Melampus. You have had enough petting to demoralize you.”



## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### THE JUDGMENT OF TRUTH.

THE two months which had elapsed since the critical meeting on the knoll had been for Barbara a time of self-abasement. As in the visions of fever she saw continually one scene, the concrete expression of her reproach—the figure of Waring, motionless against the pine-tree, the appeal of his eyes; then herself going toward him with the deliberation of the damned, giving herself into his arms, drawing his lips down to hers. What madness had been upon her!

But had it all been madness? A woman beside herself with defrauded life might not be responsible for a sudden, desperate act. But what if that act should stand for the truth that, laws and conventions to the contrary, her soul was Waring's; by every sympathy that drew them together, by the seal of their understanding of each other. Truth enmeshed in a lie—the lie of her marriage—truth itself condemned her. Because the highest of her was his, she stood defenseless under the judgment of heaven. She was learning how miserable they are whose sins involve the soul, as if they should come to destruction by the path of life. In the womb of the highest good was evil. Not darkness, but light itself judged her.

Yet through all her anguish the memory of that instant's surrender reinforced her being with stubborn joy. She would pay the price by the strangeness forever be-

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tween them; but to have told him once that her soul was his was worth eternal deprivations.

So, though she bowed herself in the dust, she could not repent. The strength of life in her as yet forbade it. The tragedy of the future was in her hands. The bliss of the past had been imposed upon her.

The mood in which these thoughts were born lasted through the period of Waring's absence from Hallworth; but on his return in early October the very longing to see him awoke in her remorse for that moment of self-betrayal. Had she not revealed her love she might still hear his voice, look upon his face, still painfully create the chimera of their innocence.

In her heart she knew that the sin was in the thought; that she had been as guilty before the kiss as after; but emotion weakened her control upon her thoughts. In the barren life stretching out before her, were not even these to be left her? To give them up was to give up love; and love was the very law of life; how could she live without them?

Yet there were hours when all the subtleties of passion seemed swept away by a clear and bitter wind of the spirit, revealing to her gaze not love, not life, but the plain fact of her guilt.

She knew herself not a creature transfigured by a supreme experience, but a sinner. Guilt was waiting for her now at the end of every perspective, as once he had waited.

Torment rang all its changes. On some days she centered her pain in him. Did he despise her? Did he think her a bad woman? Did he think her—worse!—a weak one? Or did he know that she had come to him

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with the first-fruits of her conscious, immortal life, with eyes, whether the eyes of a sinner or no, that looked in that instant upon the beatific vision.

During this time she devoted herself to her husband with a fervor of solicitude which did not escape even his dreaming eyes. He himself had the leisure just then to be grateful. The book was finished. The University had not yet opened its doors. He was glad to walk and talk with Barbara, to renew his acquaintance with her. Sometimes the expressions of her sensitive face puzzled him. He surprised there a humility which he could connect with nothing in her simple existence. Often she was preoccupied—forgot to answer him, her brooding eyes fixed on far horizons. One day he jestingly reproached her for her withdrawn moods, saying that she must not grow like her poor, abstracted husband, too old to reform. In a voice that quivered she answered:

“If I ever can be as good as you I shall be thankful.”

“As good as I am! My dear, I am a monument of selfishness, an unsocial, ungracious scholar. Surely you must know it by this time.”

Her faint, sad smile was her only answer.

He noticed that she shrank from the few awkward caresses he bestowed upon her, but he thought it was her preoccupied mood. He had come to the conclusion that tradition had not overrated the changeableness and barometrical dispositions of women; yet he was thankful that the representative of the sex who had fallen to his share was so winning in her gentleness; so unobtrusive of her hidden life. She was just enough in his own existence to lay the specter of loneliness which at long intervals had haunted his bachelor days. He congratu-

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lated himself that he had found the one woman in all the world who could appreciate and respect his obligations to himself while living her own life with quiet dignity. The thought of active, all-pervading Mrs. Joyce sometimes made him shudder; even her reputation for French dishes but increasing her strength as a destructive principle. Suppose that in his early manhood the gods had first made him mad, that they might destroy him with such a woman. He shook off the idea like a nightmare.

As the opening of the University drew near, dread of her first meeting with Waring oppressed her, a dread which on its reverse side was longing. Her youth some days transcended her sin. Could they never again clasp each other's hands like little children, and go away together into the summer-world? It had not been all passion, all sin. Ah, indeed, that had been but a narrow if intense part of it. She thought of their happy friendliness, their happy laughter; of that golden fellowship with all young things, which made even the aged earth their playmate in the immortal renewals of the spring. Must this wealth of innocence be given up because deep had called unto deep, in one unfathomable moment? They could be again together could they be certain that such a moment would never return.

The University opened. The campus again was thronged. Youth in all its bravery signalled to the forces of the world to witness its triumphs. Indoors the married and defeated sat.

In her anxiety to avoid Waring, Barbara was divided between a choice of shelters, the narrow house, the wide and open world. He would inevitably call upon her hus-



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band, must in courtesy ask for her. The house was too small for excuses. She would have to face him.

On the other hand, choose the loneliest road in all the lonely country back of Hallworth, and she might meet him on it. It would be worse to meet him where they would be alone together, than where the restraint of others should clamp their spirits into at least outward obedience. She decided upon the shelter of the house. Her husband might bring Waring home with him but forget to summon her. The trial would be thus postponed.

But Waring did not come, nor did her husband bring him to the house. Did he despise her? Had she killed his love with her confessing kiss? She clung to the thought of their congenial tastes and interests. The chain which bound them had been forged out of a true friendship. Nothing could destroy that.

The memory of his appealing words, "Barbara, help me!" comforted her. He must have loved her to have uttered them, and if he loved her he could not despise her.

She summoned her courage one day to ask her husband about him. She could no longer bear the suspense.

"Hasn't he been here to see you? That's strange! Well, no, it isn't, either. He's overwhelmed with work just now. His appearance reproaches me."

"What do you mean?" Barbara said, her face growing white.

"He looks ill. I am afraid I overworked him this summer."

The first Military hop demanded her presence. She



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had been appointed one of the patronesses for the season. The Boy, the painfully chivalrous freshman of what now seemed to her a long-ago year, had become the president of the senior class. To please him she had accepted the office of patroness. His boyishness, charmingly tempered with his seniority, had done her homage ever since his recognition of her at Waring's reception. He seemed proud of the fact that they had been classmates.

He called to ask her if he might have the honor of taking her to the first event and of filling out her card. She accepted, hiding necessity under her feigned pleasure. She had no fear of Waring's name being on her dance-card. If the Boy should ask him for it, he would know how to fence.

The Boy did ask him, lying in wait for him after a lecture. This young professor, who had had the baptism of fire in the Spanish War, was one of the Boy's University idols. Of Waring's devotion to Mrs. Penfold he had heard a little.

He presented her card, therefore, with enthusiastic confidence, tempered by his reverence for Waring.

"Mrs. Penfold has done me the honor to accept my escort to the Military," he began, with grave importance, "and I am making out her card. Will you put down your name?"

Waring paused on the steps. His dark eyes searched the Boy's face for a moment, then he took the bit of pasteboard with a hand that trembled.

"It would give me the greatest pleasure to put my name down—but—but I am not going to the Military. I am rushed with work."

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"We can't spare you!" the Boy said boldly. "You must come."

Waring shook his head.

"I may drop in for a moment, but I can't bind myself. Thank you for the honor you do me," he added, with a smile that illuminated the whiteness of his face.

The Boy went away puzzled. He wondered why Waring should refuse Mrs. Penfold's card of all cards. It seemed ungracious of him.

On the night of the Military the Boy came in all the glory of a carriage and brought roses for Barbara. She was glad they were not red.

For the honor of the Boy, so she told herself, she put on the prettiest gown she possessed. He looked her over with frank, youthful approval as he handed her her flowers.

She prayed that Waring would not be there, yet she was conscious of bitter disappointment when she saw that her prayer was answered.

The Boy danced the first two waltzes with her, then gave her reluctantly into Dutton's hands. Dutton seemed overflowing with some unspoken happiness. Barbara's own grief had made her peculiarly sensitive to others' joy.

"How is Allaire?" she said. "I haven't seen her lately."

"She's just lovely!" Dutton answered, in a burst of candor.

"I hope you will be happy," Barbara said simply. Her quiet sympathy drew his confidence.

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"We will be," he said, "if I can ever get a full professorship. They'll not let me have her until I do."

"I wish I could help you. I want you to be happy."

"You've always been our very good friend. Allaire and I don't forget it."

Her misery bit at her heart. Here were two people free to follow their innocent love.

"Have you seen Richard? Of course you have," he said, in a pause of the waltz.

Barbara turned away her eyes.

"No; he is very busy, I believe."

"He looks done up. None of us can work up to Dr. Penfold's limit. I wish we could."

"My husband is reproaching himself."

"Oh, there's no need of that," Dutton hastened to say kindly. "I don't believe it was just that. He had the summer-school besides."

"Yes," Barbara said faintly, straining every nerve to keep her self-control.

In the middle of the evening she became conscious that Waring had entered the Armory. For a moment the gay scene swam about her. Turning to the man who was with her, and who was wondering at her pallor, she said:

"Will you take me to Miss Dare? I—I have a message to give her."

Once at the Emperor's side she dismissed him with all the graciousness she could summon, then turned to her friend.

"Helena, will you go with me to the dressing-room? It is intolerably warm in here."

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“You and I were not made for the gay world, Barbara,” she answered lightly as she rose. “I am always amazed when I see you dancing, talking with these infants. You’re young enough to, dear knows, but that aged soul of yours!—it is almost as old as mine.”

So with a string of nothings she covered up her understanding of Barbara’s plight. They stayed in the dressing-room during the intermission. When they went down again Waring was still there. He danced once with Mrs. Joyce, but left at the end of the waltz. Like an automaton Barbara went through the remainder of her program.

On her return home she heard the sound of voices in her husband’s study. She could distinguish Waring’s.

Flight to her own room was her first thought. A strange physical coldness enveloped her, made her tremble. No, she could not face him.

But the moment must be lived. She must see his face, even if it held contempt of her.

She went into the little drawing-room. Mehitabel came in and took her mistress’s cloak and brought her bouillon. Sometimes she treated Barbara like a child, sometimes like a great lady. To-night Mrs. Penfold’s manner, withdrawn and sad, held her at a distance.

Good-bys were being said in the upper hall. Then Waring came down the stairs. In the lower hall he paused. The pause was followed by his entrance into the room where she was. She rose and faced him, the tragic look in her face contrasting oddly with her festive dress.

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She had meant to say something conventional, to smile, to act, but the question in her heart trampled out the empty, formal phrases. Waring himself said not a word, seemed incapable of speaking. They stood for a moment gazing at each other, then in silence he bowed very low and, turning, left her. The homage in his eyes, in his act, answered her question. For the moment peace possessed her.



## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### AN ENTERPRISE OF WOOLING.

BARBARA'S avoidance of Waring at the dance, though he knew the necessity of it, though it fell in with his own instinct for her preservation, yet increased tenfold the misery which had driven him there. Speech between them under such circumstances, indeed under any conventional circumstances, seemed sacrilege; yet he longed for the benediction of a word from her.

Did she despise him? Ah, no! She could not. She had not come to him that September day with the soul of truth in her suffering eyes to despise him now.

The memory of that scene never left him. Its hour had become the "I am" of his being. On the streets of New York, on the campus, in the lecture-room, her face blotted out all other scenes; her kiss all other acts. The world was dreaming. He and Barbara alone were awake. But they had awakened to pain. Pain and love—love and pain—there was no difference!

Ecstasy and despair fought for the supremacy of him. Ecstasy that she was his; despair that she was another's.

But was she another's for all time? His longing for her strangled his honor. What was Penfold to him that he should consider him? A scholar who had married a girl twenty-five years his junior, only to leave her, and go back—miserable hermit!—into the deserts of his

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scholarship—such a man should have his wife taken from him by law.

The traitor thought kissed him on both cheeks; but he put it from him that he might go that night to Dr. Penfold's on his necessary errand with a conscience free at least of future burdens.

Once there he lingered, hoping for another sight of Barbara. He heard her come in. Then restlessness seized him and he soon made his adieus.

He did not know what he should say to her. When he came into her presence he was dumb before that look in her eyes. Words were impossible as wings. He could only bow low and leave her.

Did she understand his silence? He entered upon his white night, one link in a long succession of such vigils, feverish with his doubt. Did she know that he was dumb with his need of her?

On his way to the library next morning the impossible happened—he met her. But Dutton was with her, aware only of his own love for Allaire, and assuming the good comradeship of all the rest of the world.

His cheerful greeting flagged Waring to stop.

“Why are you rushing on so, Richard? Mrs. Penfold was telling me she hadn't received her October *College and State*. It's a great number. I want her to read 'All'—Miss Sordello's contribution.”

“You must certainly read it,” Waring said, forcing himself to meet her eyes.

“Is it—like her?”

“Isn't it, Dutton?”

Dutton blushed.

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"I—I think it is. It's quaint—humorous."

"I had difficulty in getting her to write it; but she repaid me with a clever piece of work—too clever for *College and State*."

Dutton beamed.

At that moment he caught sight of Allaire in the distance, and excused himself abruptly but gaily.

Waring and Barbara were left together.

"You are going—home? May I—walk with you?"

"Yes," she said, in a low voice.

Silence again enclosed them. He could not bear it.

"May I speak once, only once? No, no, don't turn away from me. You wouldn't—if you knew——"

"I must speak, too—once, only once."

"What is it? Tell me. Trust me."

"You do not despise me?"

"Despise you! Oh, my God!"

"I had peace for one moment last night, because you bowed low to me. You would not bow low to—a—woman you—despised."

"Hush, you torture me!"

They walked on in silence. The broad light of eleven o'clock in the morning, the open campus, freed their emotions not into commonplaceness, but into the calm of fatality.

"What is it that you had to say to me?"

"I was dumb last night—because——"

"Don't say it!"

Her voice was harsh with command.

"I understand," she went on; "I can endure—if you do not—despise me. We must never speak—again. We must not see—each other."

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"But we must keep up the appearance of friendship—until——"

"Until what?"

He shook his head. Her tragic acceptance of the inevitable killed even the traitor thought again kissing his cheek. In that instant the solitude of his future unrolled before him.

"Never mind. But you understand that it is necessary to appear—friendly—this world is—small."

"I understand."

"We will act!"

"No, we will be real," she cried. "We will not even think—not think—not think."

She turned to him her face alight with challenge, with command unspeakable. Then she held out her hand, the old, sweet gesture, now the symbol of their separation.

As he turned from her, helpless, miserable, he saw Perdita Ravenel coming toward him, a tall, svelt figure, swaying slightly as she walked. He longed to escape. The thought of courteous nothings which must pass between them was scarcely tolerable.

But, the habit of years strong upon him, he went to meet her, his muscles in order for the inevitable smile, the light words of greeting.

She opened their conversation with a challenge.

"Why have you not answered my invitation to dinner? Now, don't proffer the usual academic excuses. I know you're worked to death by this merciless machine, but speak the truth and I'll forgive you."

Waring looked bewildered.

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"Your—invitation to dinner?" he said slowly.

"Yes; didn't you receive it? I sent it three days ago, and it is for to-morrow."

A flush overspread Waring's face. Speechless, embarrassed as a schoolboy, he put a hand in an inner pocket and drew out a bundle of unopened letters, the accumulated mail of three days.

"I suppose it's among these," he said, ruefully. "I have been forced—to neglect—I know it's outrageous, but——"

Perdita was smiling. Her enigmatical eyes studied his face. She saw there much that increased the difficulties of her enterprise of wooing, but appealed at once to her humor and her altruism. She was not, never could be, in love with Waring; but she had an intellectual appreciation of a certain fascination in his personality. Had he looked so gray and worn for love of her she could conceive how hard it would be to resist him. How much harder for a woman in love with him, as she believed Barbara was—a woman bound, moreover, to a man conceived and born in numbers, hedged in with them like spikes! Yes, this was certainly a case which called for philanthropy, and Perdita, with the ghost of a Leonardo smile upon her lips, resolved that for once philanthropy should be productive of something more than resentful gratitude.

She checked Waring, who was still fumbling through the letters.

"Never mind the note. The point is will you come? It's to be a very innocuous, very proper Sunday dinner—not that I mean to starve you."

"I think I have no engagement for that night,"



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Waring said, hoping that his unwillingness was not in his voice.

“Good! Your heroic virtue will be rewarded. The number of guests is small, but the selection is choice. Professor and Mrs. Sordello are coming, the President—and, whom do you think? You are at liberty to choose the most impossible person now before the public in these United States.”

“I am consumed with curiosity. Not Willoughby?”  
Perdita laughed.

“No, not Willoughby. John Rebbor.”

“John Rebbor! How in——”

“How in creation is he at Hallworth as the guest of the President? That’s the secret. You’ll know later on.”

A look of animation, of interest, lit up for the moment Waring’s eyes.

“John Rebbor! I think he’s a thief and robber on the most colossal scale the world has ever seen, but I’m delighted that you are giving me this chance to meet him. It is good of you.”

“Oh, no. I thought he might interest you. He belongs to a genus we don’t often see up here. I’m glad you call him by his rightful titles. His trust seems to me the most unscrupulous of them all.”

“It’s illegal to begin with,” Waring said; then, walking beside her, he enlarged on the subject, going back for the moment into that world of affairs where in the press of wide human interests a man may forget for a time the bitterest heartache. If woman’s love is woman’s whole existence, it is as a rule because her existence is so narrow.

## CHAPTER XL.

### “THE OUTRAGEOUS JOHN REBBOR.”

PROFESSOR and Mrs. Sordello, Waring and Perdita were assembled in the bemirrored drawing-room, awaiting the President and his guest. Toward John Rebbor they felt something of the curiosity which a Martian suddenly descended to this planet might awaken. The business man was a *rara avis* in the guest-book of Hallworth, a chronicle for the most part of distinguished scholars. That the head of a notorious trust should visit the University was an event fraught with dramatic possibilities in the line of contrasts. Under their desultory conversation each of the four was secretly wondering what would be the outward appearance, the surface characteristics of this man—responsible—if report were to be trusted—for the business ruin of an unholy number of his fellows.

Even Waring forgot for the time the trouble that filled his life in his speculations concerning Rebbor. Such a man seemed to him a criminal—only distinguished from the common run of criminals by the colossal proportions of his crime. That the United States was a fertile breeding-ground for men of his type was only another evidence, he thought, that the original spirit of Washington's country had perished within the swollen body. What was to be the end of a society where such organizations as Rebbor's trust were possible? Would the blood mania which had wiped out

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Bourbon France and the sins of Bourbon France together wipe out some day this greater tyranny?

He smiled at his own thoughts, with his inevitable appreciation of both sides of the question—the surest preventive of martyrdom!—the martyrs, of whatever age, being sacrificed to one fixed idea.

The two presidents entered. The President of the University introduced the president of a trust.

Waring, his introduction over, was conscious of disappointment that the magnate's appearance should be so normal. He had expected he scarcely knew what, certainly not this man in conventional evening-dress; his keen, almost ascetic face betraying the attrition of thought; this man who seemed rather shy and nervous in the presence of his hostess.

Why was he visiting the President? Waring knew that previous to this visit they had been unacquainted. Did he wish to buy up Hallworth, making himself a second founder? Perish the thought!

But disjointed speculation came to an end with the announcement of dinner. The President, giving his arm to Mrs. Sordello, followed Perdita and the guest of honor, Sordello bringing up the rear with Waring, who was thankful that the women were in the minority. Since Barbara had filled his life he had found it difficult to be with them long without betraying his preoccupation.

“What do you think of him?” Sordello asked, in his low, guttural voice.

“Not the roaring lion I expected.”

“His quiet is more ominous.”

They sat down to a round table, drawing them into a

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circle which promised ultimate coziness if all went well. Perdita was asking Rebbor if he had been through any of the buildings.

“Only into your art-museum,” he replied in a clear-cut voice, which betrayed a culture as genuine as that which Hallworth offered, but from a far different source.

“Mr. Rebbor wished to compare a Luini in his collection with the one in ours,” the President said.

“After seeing it I am convinced that his ‘Holy Family’ in my collection is a copy. I have not had the leisure,” he added, with an apologetic smile, “to make a deep enough study of such matters to stand on sure ground.”

“Oh, as for that,” Sordello said, “even professed connoisseurs are sometimes deceived. I knew a man in Madrid who had devoted his life to Murillo, yet was tripped up at last on a technicality, and found himself a whole fortune out of pocket.”

“A costly mistake!” Waring said.

He was wondering whether this financier had any real knowledge and love of art, or whether he bought up pictures as he bought up stocks, to realize his power. Had he come to the University solely for the purpose of seeing its Luini? Waring thought not.

“Are you especially fond of Luini?” Mrs. Sordello asked, in her full, matronly voice.

“To me he has all the grace of Leonardo, without his unpleasant—what shall I call it? Well, I think the exasperating smile of Mona Lisa sums it up,” he answered, his shyness evidently dissolving under the warmth of a congenial subject.

The President laughed.

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"So you find that lady exasperating! I have never had the courage to say what I really thought of her, lest I should be thrust into outer darkness."

"You don't like her?" Perdita asked.

"She spoils the Salon Carre for me!"

Perdita turned to Rebbor with an air of gay command.

"Now that you have confessed you must give your reasons. Is she too mysterious, too suggestive of *der ewige Weibliche*?"

"I do not understand German," Rebbor said simply.

"Is she—too feline?"

"That's the word. Now, that cat-look isn't in Luini's women. They are sweet, simple creatures, full of grace, yet gentle."

Waring listened with astonishment. This man, himself a monstrous and tricky Grimalkin hunting down the little mice called men, was incredible as a champion of simplicity and gentleness.

"Is your collection large, Mr. Rebbor?" Mrs. Sordello asked.

"Very small. It is entirely made up of the Old Masters. I only began to form it ten years ago when on a forced vacation abroad."

"Have you had a guiding principle in selecting it?" Waring asked.

The great man smiled.

"Aside from Luini, I am fond of the Venetian painters, especially of Giorgione, but I have never been able to procure one of his works."

"Why do you like Giorgione especially?" Waring



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asked, conscious that his questioning might hold an element of discourtesy, yet unable to resist the temptation.

John Rebbor fingered his salt-cellar a moment before answering. He seemed to have sudden accessions of shyness, as if realizing his position among the avowedly academic.

“You know ‘The Concert’ in the Pitti?”

“Yes.”

“Well, it was that picture that first made me take an interest in Giorgione—not wholly artistic, either. You remember the central figure, the monk at the harpsichord?”

“Very well.”

“Something in his face drew me and I used to go and look at him every day. He seemed to be wanting a lot of things he didn’t have. I used to wish I could ask him just what they were. I got friendly with him. You know how you do with a picture.”

He delivered his sentences with little, abrupt pauses between. Perdita, charmed with this naive self-revelation from such a source, made a challenging comment.

“To me it’s the face of a poet, and I suppose poets are never satisfied. In any case it’s not a modern face; perhaps that’s the reason it appeals to us.”

John Rebbor’s eyes lit up.

“That’s it! It’s not an American face.”

“I suppose you might still find such eyes in some dreaming monastery of the Appenines,” Dr. Hunt said; “but not in this country. We all see too clearly!”

The faint note of irony caught Rebbor’s attention.

“You think that’s it? I guess you’re right. Any-

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way, we parted friends, the monk and I, and I've liked Giorgione ever since."

His voice was sincere. Waring wondered what mysterious current of deep-buried feeling had drawn this far-scheming financier to Giorgione's monk, with his wistful look, like a sigh from the Middle Ages. He thought of John Rebbor sitting in the Pitti Palace before the picture, oblivious for the time of accumulating millions, conscious only of his desire to question a strange and haunting face. Was it possible for a man to have two distinct personalities? No; human nature was single.

"Mr. Waring, may I ask your first name?"

Rebbor was bending toward him, studying him intently with his keen gray eyes.

"Richard."

"Are you the Richard Waring who reported for the New York *Eagle* in the Spanish War?"

"I had that privilege."

"I am glad of this chance to congratulate you. I used to read your reports in preference to those of any other paper. But how comes it that you——?"

He paused, drawing back from the brink of a social discourtesy, but the question was in his eyes—"Why are you in a university, you who had such a chance in the world?"

Perdita threw herself into the breach.

"Mr. Waring does not believe in the monastic ideal of a university. We suspect him of wooing two worlds."

"He has placed his talents at Hallworth's service," Dr. Hunt said graciously. "You probably know *College and State*."

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“I have seen it quoted. Is it your magazine, Mr. Waring?”

“We started it two years ago,” Waring said simply. “Some of us thought it a good plan to have an organ that might voice the University’s interest in political questions.”

“Tell me more of it. Are the young men of Hallworth interested in politics as a rule?”

He continued to question Waring until he had possessed himself of a fair knowledge of the matter. Then he turned the subject to another aspect of university life, as if he had suddenly locked up his newly acquired information.

In the conversation that followed Waring noticed how Rebbor steered away from any subject that might remotely touch upon his own enormous place in the economy of the country. His attitude toward himself was as unobtrusive as his garments. He seemed like one who had always asked questions—never answered them.

Waring’s prejudice against him as a Titanic thief was weakening under the quiet pressure of his apparently simple personality. Was this effect but an epitome of other greater effects? Did he gain his huge ends by that same stillness and tenacity of purpose?

They went into the drawing-room for coffee, gathering about the wood fire in a circle that appealed to Perdita’s sense of humor by the contrast of its innocent appearance with the importance of the units which it held. John Rebbor, sipping his coffee, into which he had put two lumps of sugar, looked as harmless as a highly esteemed leading citizen of some little town.

“I like your collection of mirrors,” he said to

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Perdita, after gazing about the room. "Pictures never satisfy everybody—but mirrors——!"

He rose to examine some of the frames more closely. His movements were quiet—deliberate to slowness. The others, under the spell of his personality, watched him in silence as he went from mirror to mirror, sometimes touching a frame with his tapering fingers.

He came back to talk with Perdita concerning some places in Italy which they both knew. He seemed most at his ease when, metaphorically, across the Atlantic. Waring wondered if too many avenging ghosts haunted these shores.

After a while there was a general movement for departure. It was then that Perdita whispered to Waring.

"Stay after the others go, please. I have something to tell you."

He wondered if she would tell him the object of Rebbor's visit. Throughout the evening he had felt that she knew perfectly the ground on which she was treading.

When all but Waring had taken their leave she came again to the fire and leaned back in a low chair with lazy grace. The brown chiffon dress which she wore brought out the dead-leaf color of her eyes. In her hair was a touch of scarlet.

"Please put on another loglet. Then tell me what you think of him."

"No; you tell me first. You have the advantage of me, for you sat by him."

Perdita smiled.

"Our monster wears an orchid in his buttonhole,

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loses his heart to Giorgione's monk, loves the Venetians and likes sweets.”

“But that isn't telling me what you think of him!”

“He is not a thief. He's a gambler. He gambles with that trust of his as Napoleon gambled with campaigns.”

“Is his guilt any the less?”

“Yes, I think it is. Here we get in the habit of thinking that all forms of self-expression must be literary or artistic. That man is a creator, almost a seer. I don't think he deliberately robs people. Everything weak goes down under the force of his energy—that's all!”

“You mean if you get in the way of an avalanche you'll get hurt.”

“He's rather too subtle for an avalanche. I'd say lightning.”

“What's he here for?”

“I've had permission to tell you. Wait!—you may need soothing.”

She rose and took a cut-glass cigarette jar from a cabinet.

“You smoke cigarettes?”

“Not often, but I will now with your permission. I suspect that he didn't come to Hallworth for the sole purpose of brooding over our Luini.”

“No, hardly. He wants to make us rich.”

“You mean he's going to give some money to the University!”

“Just a little sum—three millions.”

Waring drew a long breath.

“But there's a condition attached,” she added.



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"There always is when one sells one's soul to the devil."

"Don't call him names. I've only ceased to be his hostess ten minutes."

"What's the condition?"

"That he be made a trustee of the University."

"What colossal——"

Waring broke off for want of an adequate word.

"The gift's colossal."

"It's sheer bribery. Does he want to own the University?"

Perdita shrugged her shoulders.

"What do you think of it? Does the proposition appeal to you?"

"Not in the least," Waring said gravely. "I think wealth made as his has been could only do harm to any man or institution that fell heir to it."

"Now if I said that I'd be accused of the emotional feminine bias."

"It seems to me a matter of fact."

They were silent for a moment, then Waring asked:

"What are his reasons? Why has he selected Hallworth? Is his motive vanity, do you think?"

"I think he wants to be in the fashion."

"When is his offer to be made public?"

"At the next Faculty meeting, I believe. May I ask on which side you will cast your vote?"

"Against the acceptance of the gift. It's an affront to the memory of John Hallworth."

"But if John Hallworth lived now he couldn't become rich."

"No," Waring said, with a touch of youthful bitter-

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ness. “It calls for less sterling qualities than he possessed. He wasn’t a clever man—he was merely honest.”

Perdita smiled, noting his thoughtful, almost somber gaze into the depths of the wood fire. Throughout this conversation he had talked to her as if she had been another man, a good comrade, scarcely ever glancing her way. This complete indifference to her as a woman told her much. She wondered how far he would submit to her wooing. Yet his preoccupation did not displease her.

“The President’s idea is that the good Hallworth can do with the money will counterbalance the evils of its source. He acknowledges those, but he’s too matter-of-fact to believe in a curse with a capital C. He leaves such fancies to the idealists like you and me.”

Waring smiled.

“Are you an idealist?”

“When nobody’s looking.”

“I wonder why we’re all so afraid of being put in that category? I suppose it suggests long hair and a limited supply of collars. By the way, how faultlessly our friend was dressed. Do you know whether he began his career by sweeping out a store?”

“I suppose so. They all do,” Perdita said lightly. “Tell me, do you think you’ll dare oppose the wishes of this man?”

“I shall vote against his gift, yes.”

“Good! I told the President you would.”

“He has me down, no doubt, for an addled dreamer.”

Perdita smiled.

“We are all that, put over against his—what shall I call it? Well, I’m not lucid, but it’s the something that makes him Dr. Hunt!”

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They were silent again, both absorbed in watching the dancing flames. Then Perdita spoke, first making sure that the light of humor was put out in her eyes.

"Mrs. Cartwright is giving a new kind of entertainment next week. The women invite the men. Will you accept my invitation? I ask you now, remembering how scornful you are of your mail."

He hesitated, the shadow in his eyes deepening.

"I ought to give up everything this winter to do justice to my work."

"But we refuse to give you up," she said archly. "You accept my invitation?"

He forced a smile.

"With pleasure."

## CHAPTER XLI.

### THE NEGATION OF THE WILL-TO-BE.

ONE by one Barbara found the outlets of life closed to her. Her command to herself and Waring that they should guard their very thoughts of each other, whatever it meant to him, was to her an iron door shutting out light and air. Emptying her soul of him, she had nothing to put in his place. Some days she wished that she and her husband were so poor that she should be obliged to work with her hands. Some days she longed for physical illness, that in it she might forget her mental pain.

Dr. Penfold had settled to his work, avid of new achievements. The machinery of the University was fully started. The social season had begun. Was this year to be a type of all the dreary years to follow? Must she watch others live, develop, while she remained in a trance of hopelessness?

"Thou shalt not" obstructed every thoroughfare. She was learning how exquisite is the torment of negation.

Her withdrawal from Waring produced in her the desire to withdraw from the other members of her little world. The Emperor, Elizabeth, Allaire, Dutton, Mrs. Maturin, Mrs. Joyce, each seemed to her only a person who was not Waring. Under her surface courtesy toward them was an indifference which not one of them could

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be with her long without feeling. The Emperor alone perceived that, a crisis of some nature being passed, Barbara was seeking safety in nothingness.

This indifference, in its essence a suspension of life, gave to her a certain calm of bearing which seemed to deny malicious whispers. Gossip concerning Barbara and Waring had not originated on the campus—where the *esprit de corps* of Perdita's reminder was as a rule effective—but from the townsfolk, not always appreciative of academic exemptness. That Dr. Penfold should neglect his young wife was natural—she should not have married a scholar so much older than herself. That Waring should seek her society was natural—he was young; besides men are always at liberty to take what a woman offers. The full blame of the situation fell thus upon Barbara.

As society is not constructed in bulkheads, the whispers of the townsfolk reached ears on the campus; the growing stream seeking the most open channels, only turned in its course when meeting some perfect obstacle such as Perdita's humor or Mrs. Maturin's calm and active incredulity.

Meanwhile Barbara, having renounced the highest gift of being, the love which in one divine moment she had recognized as the law of life, sought to forget the light. She filled up her days as best she could with household duties, with the planning of clothes, with long walks, always taken in unfamiliar places.

One dreary afternoon in November, when a persistent, whining rain shut out the hills and shut in her soul, the house becoming unbearable, she thought of the library as a refuge. She would climb to its highest stack,



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possess herself of a book and a window and seek a few moments of oblivion.

She made her journey quickly without encountering any familiar members of her world. As she went from stack to stack, the silent rows of books seemed to her more friendly, more intelligible than human beings. In their society she could be herself. Without being personal, they preserved the personal element, the clearest thoughts, the sincerest emotions of the men and women who had given birth to them.

Though she did not know it the love of the grave was upon her in this her hour of rejection, drawing her to the abstract. Since she could not have the real she would content herself with these rich shadows.

She took from the shelves a volume of philosophy which would require the closest attention to read it intelligently. Then she settled herself in a high window-seat overlooking the lake, her feet on a chair, the book on her knees. She pressed her cheek against the cold pane, gazing out for a moment over the rain-drenched campus. Haunted and holy ground! Whatever her love for War-ing had become, she could not forget that it was once innocent, spontaneous, childlike. The places where they had been together were forever hallowed.

She turned to her book, but the tears in her eyes shut out the page. She brushed them away and began to read. The volume was one of Schopenhauer's. She was unacquainted with his writings, but not with his philosophy, to which her uncle had introduced her. Then she had received it intellectually. It had not penetrated to her spiritual consciousness. Now, as so often happens, life interpreted knowledge. As she read she felt herself

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drawn by some mysterious current of sympathy to this writer, who above all men had felt the full fascination of the negative; who had made a bride of darkness.

The negation of the Will-to-Be! Was not this the solution of life, even for those to whom the raptures of love were lawful? Would it not be at last exquisite relief to leave the never satisfied passion in the paradisaal garden, passing from its heat and light and color into a cold and night-enveloped world? To cease to feel, to cease to desire, to leave a universe where the kiss was followed by the pangs of parturition, was not this the only goal?

Calm possessed her for the moment. She would set out at once, she thought, upon this pilgrimage whose end was extinction. She would devote her life to the giving-up of life.

Footsteps in the stack were drawing nearer to her. Perceval came toward her with the look of genuine pleasure which always lit up his face on meeting her. Barbara was glad that it was Perceval and no one else. The consciousness that this man in some way had suffered put her, as it put many others, at ease in his presence.

Toward Barbara Perceval felt a peculiar gentleness. The circumstances of her marriage, her friendship with Waring, and of late the impossible reports which had reached his ears, all combined to awaken his interest in her; an interest not without its desire to protect.

Something in her attitude now told him that she was in trouble. Her eyes turned toward him were large, unconsciously appealing.

“What are you reading, Mrs. Penfold?”

“Schopenhauer.”

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"He is not enlivening on such a gloomy day. I should recommend only novels in November."

She smiled.

"He was making me feel quite peaceful. I like his philosophy—the very little I know of it."

"It rests the eyes sometimes. Schopenhauer is my dark room."

"So you like him, too—even though——" She hesitated.

"Even though I am pledged to optimism? Perhaps for that very reason."

He studied her face for a moment with his penetrating gaze, which always seemed impersonal, as if he were searching for the abstract in the concrete.

"You are fond of fairy-tales," he said, with the tone of a final statement.

"Indeed, yes. How did you know?"

He smiled, but only returned a question.

"Have you seen some of the new volumes in the folk-lore section? They are delightful. If you will come with me, I will show them to you."

He took the Schopenhauer from her hands gently. Barbara thought of the evening when Perdita had read her "The Princess and the Wild Swans."

Perceval led her to a stack on a lower floor. Nor did he leave her until he had seen her safely in another nook with a volume on her lap.

"Don't go back to the other stack," he said kindly, as he took his leave; "it is cold up there—and too far away from everybody."

A look in his eyes gave a deeper meaning to his simple words. Did he understand?

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The fairy-tales did for her what Schopenhauer could not do. She forgot for the time being the misery of her existence in that world where forgotten castles forever face on magic seas, their towers lit with dawns supernal.

“You should not read in this dim light.”

His voice seemed to come to her from the purple horizons over which the castles reigned. She looked up bewildered. Waring stood beside her. In the glare of the electric light, which he had turned on, his face seemed worn and tired, yet held a certain cheerfulness, an impersonal expression, assumed, it might be, for the privilege of speaking to her. He began abruptly, as if fearing pauses.

“Has Dr. Penfold told you of Rebbor’s proposed gift?”

“No, he has said nothing,” she answered, forcing herself to look at him calmly, as if he might be any one else.

“What is it? Something to do with Hallworth?”

Then he told her everything concerning the matter, the details converging toward his own ultimate part in it. As he related the incidents of Perdita’s dinner Barbara felt that, whatever course of future conduct they had decided upon, he was still passionately desirous that she should know the intimate and daily circumstances of his life. They could not be his until they were hers.

He prolonged his story, finding the relief in the mere telling of it that other lovers find in avowal. He should still be hers in their very denials.

His account of the Faculty meeting aroused her inter-



## THE NEGATION OF THE WILL-TO-BE

est to the degree that she forgot for the time being her fear of his eyes.

A strong opposition existed against Rebbor's trusteeship. Waring, at the head of it, had made a speech, which the President had answered with cool and cutting arguments.

"I am literally slashed," he said, in conclusion. "But I still think I am right."

"Is it decided?"

"Nothing will be decided until after the first of the year. It is Rebbor's wish—he's crafty as a fox—that Hallworth should take its time in considering his offer."

"Then there is still opportunity for a campaign?" she said lightly.

"It will have to be a secret one. The matter has not been made public."

"So you are not discussing it in *College and State*?"

"Oh, no!"

Unconsciously her near presence was overthrowing his self-command. The look in his eyes worshiped her. She turned her head away as she said:

"Is this trust so very wicked? I know nothing of such matters."

"May I send you some books to-morrow? Dry enough for the most part, but they'll throw light, perhaps."

"Yes, send them. I want something—to read! I had Schopenhauer this afternoon, but Mr. Perceval took it from me, and gave me this instead."

He bent over her, turned a page, touched her hand in turning it. She rose at once, facing him with miserable eyes. His, as miserable, gazed back at her.



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"I must go," she said faintly; "it is late."

He bowed, his eyes asking forgiveness, comprehension.

"I will send the books to-morrow."

She made her way to the house, unconscious of the buffeting wind and rain. If these were the steps to negation, you might go mad before you reached that night-enveloped goal.

The house was not yet lighted. She went directly to her room, sinking down in perfect fatigue of spirit by her bed. A bitter, voiceless cry went up from her.

"Oh, my youth! My youth!"

## CHAPTER XLII.

### THE ORDER OF FRIENDSHIP.

WHEN Perdita's invitation to dinner was followed by other overtures, as caressing in their friendliness to Waring as the brushing of a flower against his cheek, he began to wonder what were her reasons in seeking him. A woman who never acted on impulse would be the last to obey an impulse of liking. Had she not been Perdita he would have refused to obey the summons, dominated as he was by the monastic spirit of an absorbing passion. But to her impersonal and winning cleverness he could safely commit even his outrageous preoccupation. That she was seeking him for his own sake he did not for a moment believe, being with all his dramatic imagination a man nearly devoid of vanity.

He saw that his grudging acceptance of her invitations amused her, so his conscience ceased to trouble him, since only the amused in this world are masters of situations. Giving himself up to her evident wishes, he found compensations in her rare type of friendliness, always bringing to the surface in others gifts they did not know they possessed. So with her charm, her appreciation of his moods, her pardon of his sins of omission, she filled up the ugly pause in which he was living, and which he knew could not endure.

Barbara must be approached, must be familiarized with the fact that there is nothing disgraceful or wrong

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in severing an unnatural marriage with the sword of the law; but all disgrace in continuing in such a union.

He had reached the stage of meeting the details. She should tell Dr. Penfold, calmly and reasonably, the whole truth of the matter. Some part of the tragedy, as she should unfold it, must be already known to him; at least her ignorance, as he supposed, of the significance of marriage. After the revelation what remained would not be difficult in an age of legal elasticity; a separation, proceedings quietly put through, then——!

Positions in other universities were at his command; universities not perhaps in Hallworth's class, but shelters for the year of obscurity which Barbara might demand. Or, giving up the academic life altogether, they could go abroad, and live there on the fifteen hundred from his uncle's estate, supplemented by the proceeds of his writings. Some days in the very idleness of his despair he went so far as to furnish a villa on the slopes of Fiesole, an embowered place haunted with other, earlier loves, beautiful with the beauty of dead years. How well her austere loveliness would blend with Italy, passionately beloved country, hiding under its wealth of flowers the graves of immemorial peoples.

These were the visions of midnight. When day broke, the veil, with its embroidery of strange towers and twisted olive-trees, was lifted. Behind it he saw himself, not a lover in a country of romance, but a mean creature, a man betrayed by passion into dishonor. He began to dread the sanity of his morning hours.

But when, the long day of work over, fatigue and loneliness, waiting on the threshold of his house of life, entered and bound him hand and foot, he gave himself

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without struggle to that future with Barbara. Dear woman! he sometimes wished that she were not so dear, so kind, so homelike. If his feeling for her were but the flaring up of blind passion there might be hope—hope of the sudden dying of the flame; but this was the tragic entanglement of souls; not alone the rapture from which the universe springs, but the quiet content of the hearth-side.

Perdita's intermittent diversion of his thoughts served to render his days less interminable, but it could not aid him in the solution of his problems. With all his spirit of good and open comradeship, perhaps just because of it, a proud reserve was the very essence of his nature. With the dear exception of Barbara, the wife of his soul, he had never talked freely to anyone. To his understanding the confessional was as inexplicable as it was foolish.

Yet during this time of suspense between hope and despair he found himself often taking his way to Perceval's rectory, drawn there by no sense of his office and ministry, but by the consciousness that this man had once known pain, perhaps knew it yet. Whatever his past, good or evil, it had become sacramental to others.

So it happened that his visits became almost daily occurrences. Sometimes returning from the performance of some parochial duty, the priest would find him by the study fire, with a book in his hand, or oftener absorbed in thought. That Waring was in trouble, was fighting some battle with himself, was evident. With the nature, the cause of this struggle, Perceval was not concerned. Of a temperament singularly susceptible to fine gradations of thought and feeling, to fine distinctions of moral

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values, he wilfully abstained from probing hearts, building up his power on the recognition of great general truths.

As a keen observer he knew that Waring and Barbara were in danger of an unlawful emotion; but he rarely lingered on the fact of sin, so avid was he of that vision of holiness hung like a mirage of the New Jerusalem above a homesick world. What these two bewildered people needed was not the consciousness of their sin—poor enough as a restraining force in Perceval's experience—but the realization of the supreme outlets of life.

Yet he knew himself, baffled and defeated, as he often felt, but an indifferent medium to bring that realization to them. He also loved—and loved in vain! His sympathy for them was too great. Sometimes he wondered if his deprivation had clouded his moral judgment.

Waring, unhappy and struggling, was nearer to him than ever before. Between the two men at this time there grew a friendship cultivated for the most part by the things they did not say. Night vigils shared in common had become frequent, Waring studying or smoking in silence, Perceval reading or thinking over a sermon.

The St. Justina now hung in the study. They would sometimes waken to the fact that they were both gazing at the picture. The face of the saint—beautiful, comprehending, but remote—was Athena to Perceval, Barbara to Waring.

Not seldom they discussed the affairs of the University, generally coming around to Rebbor's proposed gift. Waring's speech before the Faculty had been vivid and high-wrought enough to mark him as the life of the opposition; while in reality it had exhausted for the time



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being his enthusiasm of protest. Perceval found him languid in his arguments, almost ready to be convinced, it would seem, of the other side of the question; but the priest was wise enough to know that this negativity was but an evidence of an emotional absorption, excluding everything foreign to it. He reflected that marriage, in nine cases out of ten the grave of romance, was for that very reason the bulwark of civilization, lovers making abominable citizens.

He himself had come to such a pass that to resign the rectorship of St. Jude's, to go into mission work in some large town or city, seemed the only course left open for the preservation of his courage and his integrity, and for the adequate performance of his priestly duties. To dwell always within sight of the longed for unattainable was not conducive to a wholesome state of mind. He had already communicated to his bishop his wish to change his field of work.

An answer had arrived in the evening mail, so perfectly meeting with his resolve that it seemed like a death-warrant. He already tasted the loneliness, the dreary one-sidedness of his future work on the East Side. With artistic tastes highly cultivated, loving the intellectual pleasures, his ministry at St. Jude's had been too congenial.

The St. Justina of Moretto da Brescia had become a living woman. But he could not remain kneeling to her as did the Duke. He must leave his environment, because she symbolized all its spiritual luxuries.

Waring was reading "Madame Bovary" by the light of the student-lamp, one hand in boyish fashion propping his brow, but his eyes looked old and tired.

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He was in evening-dress, having an engagement later to go with Perdita to Mrs. Maturin's. That Perceval had refused her invitation surprised and puzzled him for a moment; then he had dismissed the matter as he dismissed all matters great and small which did not touch upon the supreme question.

Perceval was wishing that he would look up, would speak. The letter had banished the priest into a bleak loneliness.

Waring became conscious after a while that Perceval's eyes were fixed upon him. He laid down his book.

"Well?"

"I have something to tell you."

"Something important?"

"To me."

"To me, then, too," Waring said, with a faint smile.

"I shall leave Sparta in the spring. I shall probably take the charge of St. Chad's in New York."

"Leave Sparta!"

Waring's full astonishment was in his voice.

"Yes—after twelve years."

He sighed as he spoke. Waring looked puzzled.

"But you belong to Hallworth. You've made St. Jude's a part of Hallworth. We can't do without you."

"I think it is rather can I do without Hallworth?"

"You're not leaving us, then, because you're tired of us?"

"Hardly."

The question Waring wanted to ask was in his eyes.

"My reasons? Well, it might be that I find my post here too congenial."

"To my way of thinking that's just the reason for

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your remaining. You're the only clergyman I know of that understands Hallworth's point of view; and in consequence you've done more good than if you'd asked us to understand yours."

"It's not generosity; it's inevitable sympathy. Logically I don't belong in the Church at all. I should feel in honor bound to leave it to-morrow if I believed Christianity a system of dogma—but——"

"But you believe it——?"

"A life to be lived."

Waring nodded.

"That seemed to be the idea of its Founder, as far as I can make out; but, Perceval, is this thing settled?"

"My going is settled. I shall probably take St. Chad's."

"In what part of New York is it?"

"In the lower East Side. It is little more than a mission."

"You don't deny yourself by halves, do you!"

Perceval smiled.

"I can't let you call it self-denial. You've already enough damaging evidence against me to prove your charge that I'm retrogressive, medieval."

Waring stared into the fire.

"I shall miss you. If it were any place but New York!—there I shall at least have a chance to see you occasionally."

He looked at his watch.

"Well, I must be off. I'm sorry you're not going; and you and Mrs. Maturin are such good friends, too—good enough for you to change your mind at this eleventh hour."

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Perceval shook his head.

“I have work to do.”

He took Waring's hand and held it in his firm grasp a moment.

“Come soon again, and finish your novel.”

“May I leave it here? It's not exactly a companion for the Church Fathers, but——”

Perceval smiled.

“St. Augustine was enough of a man of the world to understand ‘Madame Bovary’—only he saw two worlds!”

“One is all I can deal with,” Waring said, taking his leave with a feeling that the priest comprehended his hidden trouble. Well! At least he could be safe with him. Perceval had the gift of silence to perfection.

Under any other circumstances Waring would have found the combination of Perdita and the environment of Mrs. Maturin's house irresistible in charm, but on this evening a heaviness of spirit possessed him which it required all his courtesy to hide. Perdita, with fine, deliberate intent, had led him away from the throng to a happy thought of a conservatory—an embowered, rose-lighted little place adjoining the library. For this he was grateful. She knew better than any woman present how to fill up silences, and yet she never asked you if you had read the latest novel.

She talked to him now with a certain delicate triumph in her manner, the air of one who has accomplished in part her end. That afternoon she had heard of her name being coupled with Waring's in a sigh of thanksgiving that he was directing his devotion along



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legitimate paths. If the townsfolk had blamed Barbara, the University for the most part blamed Waring that he had not shown himself more of a man of the world. The slight ostracism which some of the townsfolk were inclined to show toward Mrs. Penfold had not reached her, for the simple reason that it could not break through the powerful campus circle which hemmed her in. Its most influential members—Mrs. Maturin, Perdita, the President, and others drawn in their train—were avowedly her friends. Pity rather than blame was accorded to her, but Perdita wished to save her even from pity.

Waring, not seeing her in the throng, longed to go in search of her; yet was glad that a restraint was upon him. He was not sure these days of what spoke in his face and eyes.

Perdita was making him laugh in spite of himself by her description of sundry encounters with the learned Teuton, who hated women, it seemed, as other men hate mosquitoes.

"I asked him his views on co-education the other evening—asked him with the gravest face! What do you think he said?"

"I can't imagine."

"He glared at me through his spectacles a moment, then guttured: 'My dear Voman—I verdamn it all.' He brought out the 'voman' with an intonation that made me feel as if I wore pattens, couldn't spell, and must go soon and milk the cow. I beat a retreat lest he should hate me still more for my laughter."

Waring smiled, thinking of the untamed Teuton, his appearance suggesting beer and scholarship in profound proportions, in juxtaposition with Perdita's rare femi-



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ninity. Only America could produce her eyes, her temperament.

He looked into her face now with the wish that he might have loved her.

"A German always thinks that a highly educated woman must be somehow immoral, because the domestic virtues and ignorance have gone so long together. Witness 'Es Lebe das Leben'!" Waring said, not to leave her with the brunt of the conversation.

"Here comes the President. Let us ask him what he really thinks in the depths of his anti-academic heart concerning co-education."

Dr. Hunt, with the air of searching for some one, was making his way toward the conservatory, where Perdita and Waring sat in full view. That these two people were often together seemed to him undesirable and unnecessary; but being of a temperament little inclined to meddle with emotions, he did not seek the positive reasons for this negative criticism.

Since Waring's speech before the Faculty he was conscious that a time might be coming when his personal liking for the young man must give way to the necessary annihilation of his disturbing Quixotism, a veritable firebrand to older and drier members of the Faculty circle, ready to oppose the President for no better reason than that he possessed the stronger will.

The sense of Waring's opposition had almost become personal since Perdita devoting herself to him had clothed him with the involuntary character of a rival. The lady was too rare for the crudities of youth, and youth must keep its place, whether in Faculty meetings or in society.

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"Good-evening, Miss Ravenel. Good-evening, Mr. Waring. Miss Ravenel, Mrs. Maturin has been inquiring for you. May I take you to her?"

He offered his arm with stiff, old-fashioned courtesy. Perdita rose, wondering why the Doctor looked so grim.

Waring, left alone, knew that he should go in search of Barbara. Beyond their meeting he never looked.

But as he rose a door at the end of the conservatory opened and Barbara herself entered. For a moment she did not see him. But in that moment he became conscious of her utter preoccupation. Her eyes, large and sad, stared unseeing at the scene before her.

"Mrs. Penfold."

She started; gave a little cry of surprise.

"I did not know—you were here this evening—Mr. Waring."

"Yes, I came with Miss Ravenel. She has just left me."

She misinterpreted his literalness. Rumors of his devotion to Perdita had reached her. She herself had seen them together on more than one occasion. Was he taking this means of telling her that his suffering might be eventually dulled? Though she knew she wronged him in the thought, jealousy bit at her heart, but she smiled above the wound to divert attention from it.

"I envy you," she said slowly, "the privilege of her society. She is—charming."

"Oh, yes!"

His offhand, indifferent agreement was like fragrant ointment to her.

She stood for a moment irresolute.

"Please don't go. I was coming to find you!"

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In his low voice was the sharpness of entreaty.

"Ought I to stay?"

"I have something particular to say to you. I cannot say it here. May I see you to-morrow? Will you take a walk with me in the afternoon?"

He spoke with a quiet intensity which seemed in the nature of a command.

"I will go with you," she answered, "if what you have to say does not concern—us."

"It does concern us."

"Then I cannot go," she said, her voice heavy with her decision.

"It is little to do for me."

The full egotism of his passion was in the words, but she only felt their loneliness. Tears came into her eyes.

"I will go," she said simply; "but don't make it hard for me."

In his heart he called himself coward, but scourging himself, he yet went the way of his desire.

Into their atmosphere of pain and resistance Dutton came at that moment with a solemn look, and the air of one facing difficulties. Not waiting for an invitation he seated himself by Barbara.

"I have brought you a message from Allaire. She says she is coming to see you to-morrow morning," he began with directness, but having finished, presented a what-next, helpless face, which might bring forth anything but the solution of going as abruptly as he had come. Waring, disinclined to give him assistance, was glad that the stupidities of perfectly happy people could never at least be his.

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But Barbara came to the rescue out of her genuine liking for Dutton, who always seemed, among the frou-frous of the social table, like a piece of home-made bread.

When she had talked with him a few moments she rose and said good-night. The Cartwrights were to take her home. They had set this hour for their departure.

She shook hands with the two men, refusing to let them go with her to the drawing-room.

Left alone together, Dutton beckoned Waring to a seat at the far end of the conservatory. His manner was mysterious; for that reason irritating.

"I hope you'll pardon my abrupt interruption of your conversation—but the fact is, Richard——"

He hesitated, his face cloudy with embarrassment.

"Well——?" Waring said coolly.

Dutton looked pained. In all their long friendship Waring had never had this aloof, critical manner toward him. What change had come over him?

"I think I am doing Mrs. Penfold a kindness——"

"Mrs. Penfold?——" Waring said sharply. "Why should she be in need of a kindness?"

Dutton shrank under the words an instant as under the cut of a whip. Then his friendship brought out the truth with courageous bluntness.

"She doesn't need it. But to-night I overheard a malicious remark made by some one who saw you sitting here. A woman made it, and because she was a woman I couldn't knock her empty head against the wall." Dutton was growing red in the face with his indignation. "But I thought I'd do what I could. I'd come and sit here with you, so it'd be three, not two. Oh, Richard,

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forgive me—but I wanted to kill her for the imputation—and so—I—came.”

He was stuttering with embarrassment, sympathy, loyalty. Waring, his heart torn by Dutton's perfect unconsciousness that anything could be wrong; by his own remorse for what he should inevitably do, laid a hand on his friend's arm.

“You're an awfully good sort, Paul, but—but you shouldn't take what a woman says so seriously.”

“On a point of honor one can't be too serious,” he answered, wondering at Waring's own calm.

Waring said nothing.

But when he parted with Perdita at the door of the Hall that evening, as by a flash of lightning he saw the meaning of her attentions to him. Gossip was abroad and she was protecting Barbara. The same spirit which had prompted Dutton's clumsy chivalry was in her esoteric wooing of himself.

“God bless her,” he thought, and in thought his gratitude bent and kissed her hand.



## CHAPTER XLIII.

### IN THE WINTER WOODS.

ALLAIRE and Barbara, after a labyrinthine conversation of no special importance, had come to the point when the revelation of great news was the only exit. Barbara, feeling centuries older than this girl, was watching her wistful face for that sudden light presaging the telling of what she had come to tell.

But Allaire in love still pitched her emotions in the minor key. She had had too hard a fight to win from her ambitious parents their consent to her marrying Dutton to be overjubilant now. From earliest childhood her unyouthful recognition of difficulties had tempered her dearest joys.

That Barbara should be the first among her friends to be told was Allaire's tribute to a kindred spirit also mistrustful of certainties, and having bewilderments of its own. The keen eyes of the girl had watched the matron to some purpose. Understanding, she refrained from judgment, another unyouthful trait.

Barbara, overtaken herself by misery, had not sought the proverbial company. She desired passionately that Allaire, that Elizabeth, that all those fortunate enough to be engaged but not married, should find the path of happiness. That Allaire and Dutton would be happy seemed written in their mutual devotion. Yet this engagement held, as the majority of engagements do, its inexplicable element. It was not clear why Allaire,

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complex, bored, astute, should care for the ingenuous and simple-minded Dutton, almost rustic in his perfect goodness. Perhaps it was a typical case of extremes meeting.

"Well, dear?" Barbara said, moved to a question by Allaire's inviting silence. "What is it?"

The light came at last into the bored, pathetic face. Allaire leaned forward, dropping her Madonna chin into the delicate cup of her little palms.

"I guess you know. It's Paul Dutton."

Barbara smiled.

"Yes, I've thought so—for some time."

"It has been rather obvious, I suppose. Neither of us had the ostrich delusion. Are you glad for us?"

"Very."

"Thank you, Barbara. I think you mean it."

"I do, indeed, though I can't say all I think."

"Which makes you one of us! Now ask me some questions."

"What shall I ask you, dear?"

"Ask me when we're to be married. I want that question over because the answer is—tragically uncertain."

"When?" said Barbara obediently.

"When God pleases to turn the hearts of my parents," Allaire answered, with her smile that always told so much more than her words.

"Are they so in need of a change of heart?"

"I am concerned about them. They sometimes seem to me like people who have missed the essential meaning of life."

"Allaire, you are—incorrigible!"

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"I speak with authority. I've found it—it's love! They may know it, too, some day when they see how happy I am."

"Are you so sure of being happy?" Barbara said, with a little sigh.

"I'm sure of Paul," Allaire answered simply. "The dry history of the case is this. They won't let me marry him unless he has a full professorship. They are disappointed that his chemistry book hasn't sold like a well-advertised novel, seventy thousand one Saturday, eighty the next, and so on. It's not the postponement—it's the reason for it that hurts me. It sticks right in my chest all the time."

"Poor little Allaire!"

"Barbara, do you love me?"

"Yes."

"And therefore Paul?"

"Yes."

"You are our forever friend?"

"Dear—yes!"

"We're yours!" Allaire said curtly.

Barbara turned away her head.

"Thank you. One needs—friends."

Silence fell between them. Allaire became practical again.

"Barbara, when I do marry I'm going to have a matron-of-honor only. May I have you?"

"What does—a matron-of-honor do?"

"She goes with the bride to the altar; she holds her flowers, she kneels with her."

Barbara shook her head.

"Oh, I couldn't!"

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"Why not?"

"I couldn't, dear, I couldn't. Why not have one of your girl friends?"

Allaire shrugged her shoulders.

"I want you. Isn't that the best of reasons?"

"It is dear of you—but I couldn't."

"Don't you care enough for me?"

"You know I do," Barbara said sadly.

"Then why?"

"I couldn't."

At the lunch table Dr. Penfold had been very talkative. Barbara had noticed that his talkative moods were frequent of late. He seemed in a blind, groping way to be expressing some kind of inner content, of approbation of Barbara and all she refrained from in their daily life.

These little compliments, little awkward attentions, filled her with a strange, haunting remorse—not that she did not love him, because she was finding out that anything more than her friendly affection would only have embarrassed Dr. Penfold—but that he was so innocent of her tragedy. He thought her still the child he had married, with a little more experience of life, perhaps, but still at heart a child, hiding no greater grief than the memory of another child who had never breathed.

She listened to him now, overburdened with her promise to go walking with Waring that afternoon. Since her refusal to be matron-of-honor for Allaire, she knew more clearly than ever before that spiritually she was beyond the pale. Only those with white souls should attend brides to the altar.

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A desperate desire was upon her to escape from this hypocrisy, this living lie of her marriage, to say to all the world "I love Richard Waring. What are you going to do about it?" throwing down her challenge to that social order hiding, protecting so many crimes under its reverence for law.

"My dear, are you thinking of giving any entertainments this winter?"

The question startled her. That Dr. Penfold should think without prompting of her social obligations was too strange. She replied to his question by another.

"What makes you ask that, Amos?"

"I believe I refused you a dinner-party last winter. I merely want to say that if you should like to give a dinner-party I should do my best to be on good behavior."

"Indeed, you are kind—as always! No; I don't want to give a dinner."

"Are you tired of society, my dear?"

"Yes, I think so—a little."

Dr. Penfold looked pleased, as if she were turning out quite the woman he expected.

"Well, it isn't inexhaustible, though we have some clever people up here."

They were silent for a time, then Barbara spoke hesitatingly.

"I—I am going for a walk with Mr. Waring this afternoon."

"Let me know when he comes. I want to see him a moment about some class-work."

"Won't you—go with us?"

"Not to-day. By the way, Richard quite distin-



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guished himself the other day in Faculty meeting. He spoke against the acceptance of Rebbor's gift."

"Did you agree with him?"

"I came to the same conclusion by a different road. As far as I can see Rebbor's trust is no more dishonest than any other. They are all pots and kettles together. My argument is that Hallworth is too rich already. We want fewer appliances and more scholarship. We used to do more with bare benches and half a book apiece when I was young."

He went on to talk of his boyhood, a recital which Barbara always shrank from, since it gave her the feeling of being married to an octogenarian.

The winter woods closed in about them like sentinels of silence. Primeval, somber, protecting, the great pines sought the sky, their branches outspread to the evening wind, traveling from the red winter sunset.

The sun was going down a crimson ball, its light staining the bronzed trunks, lying like blood upon the virgin snow. Waring and Barbara, their hands clasped, stood silently side by side gazing down the long forest aisles toward the western splendor. He had brought her to the depths of the wood, she following his leadership with the strange acquiescence of one walking in a dream. They had spoken few words to each other, and these commonplaces. Now silence had taken complete possession of them. There, far away from all sound of human life or sight of that society which seemed to Waring to be receding farther from them, he meant to tell her what must be done to give them their freedom.

Their hands clung together, but she stood stiffly

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erect, her eyes looking beyond the sunset. Her desire to keep the frequented forest road, to hold Waring at the border of friendship, had been swept away like a straw by his presence. Her need of him was unfolding to her intellect as well as to her emotions, bitter realities which refused to be marshaled under the ethical flag. What if, after all, her marriage should be the greater sin!

The glow behind the black pines deepened. In the orange sky a slip of a young moon hung. Still they did not speak. The hour was sacramental. Waring could not break the hush of nature.

His grasp on her hand tightened.

"Barbara."

"Yes," she said faintly.

"We belong to each other."

"Yes."

His voice was calm, decisive, compelling her to listen.

"Since we belong to each other, is not your marriage a great evil?"

She nodded, dumb with her pain.

"Is it not your duty to sever it?"

She remained silent.

"Barbara."

"Richard!"

Anguished appeal was in her voice, but his liberated will closed his ears.

"Is it not your duty to sever it?" he repeated.

"You said you would not make it hard for me!" she cried.

He put his hand over his eyes a moment, shutting out accusing visions, then turned in accusation upon her.

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"Are you facing it—or are you—playing with me?"

"Richard!—God forgive you!"

He did not look at her, till he became aware that she was weeping, her smothered sobs seeming to suffocate her.

"Take back that word! It makes me——!"

"Barbara, I am so wretched. Don't hold me at this distance. Give me your hand again."

She gave it into his, and again they stood silent, side by side, gazing into the depths of the wood. Her sobs, not yet conquered, disturbed the silence. She caught her breath.

"God forgive me for making you weep so. I'm a wretch, but I'm an unhappy one, Barbara. Isn't it some excuse that I'm unhappy?"

She nodded, not able to speak.

"Can you blame me for wanting to face it—solve it?"

She shook her head.

"Does it seem so terrible to you—a—a—divorce?"

"No more terrible than this," she said, in a low voice.

"Only another wickedness to this wickedness."

"It is your marriage which is wrong."

"No—it is I—myself."

He gazed at her with a long tenderness.

"You are not wrong. You are trapped. Must you remain trapped? Is it right? Is it just?"

She was silent for some moments, then she said:

"I married him. He is my husband. Nothing can undo that."

"But it is not a true union."

"I married him," she repeated.

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Her sobs again choked her. Her clasp of his hand tightened.

"I struggled," she said.

"I know."

"I prayed."

"Yes."

"And God has left me!"

He was silent.

"You must not despise me too much. When I married—I did not know what love—was—or—marriage; but I wasn't happy even then—though I scarcely knew why. I suffered all that summer before—but—but I had given my promise, and his life had been—so hard. I sinned, but I did not know how much until too late. Now whichever way I turn I sin—and I am young. Richard! What am I to do with this long life stretching out before me!"

Sobs shook her frame.

He was dumb with their mutual misery. She went on as if the words gave her relief.

"Those summer nights when you were working next——!"

"Oh, those summer nights!"

"I cried against heaven. You say I'm trapped. I said so to God! It was wicked, but I said it. Was it my fault that I was brought up by a recluse knowing nothing of the world, that I came to Hallworth an ignorant dreamer? Then—then you came—too late. Other women are not wicked when they love, but I—I——"

"And knowing this you will not face it. You must face it!"

His voice was harsh with command.

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The storm of her confession gave her a moment's calm.

"Yes, I will face it," she said slowly. "I will find—try to find—the truth."

"There is but one true course of action."

She was silent.

"Will you promise to face it squarely, Barbara?"

"Yes," she said, raising her head, as if the very thought of something decisive, inevitable, gave her courage. "Squarely—if I can!"

They stood again in silence. The last light was fading from the west. With approaching night the wind grew colder. Barbara shivered.

"We must go back."

"Yes."

Still he lingered.

"You do not despise me?" she whispered.

"You are white as God's angels."

"Come."

Hand in hand, with curious lost-child air about them, they went through the winter wood. A little path led to a country road, leading in turn to the forest road. As they came out of the first road a familiar figure joined them, emerging suddenly, mysteriously, from some shadow. It was the Emperor.

"I am belated," she said coolly and with no sign of surprise. "May I have your company home?"

So it was that three, not two, came back to the campus together.



## CHAPTER XLIV.

### THE LIFE-WARRANT.

BARBARA, in keeping her promise to face the situation, encountered not only her particular case but the problems of a universe which from childhood had been to her but an uneasy home. On some days her vision contracted to center upon the three actors of the drama, her husband in his impassive part, she and Waring groping, yet tragically sure of their need of each other. On others her stifled heart found relief in roaming through all the history that she knew, saying to each great ghost whom she encountered, "What is truth?"

One figure, laurel-crowned, saturnine, austere, dun with the smoke of hell, she never questioned, remembering where he had placed Paolo and Francesca. Yet he had pitied them!—had swooned with very pity.

To the Bible she sometimes went, but with no sense of its being an absolute authority. Whatever she was, her education had made her anything but a Protestant. When a child her uncle had read certain portions of the Bible to her, as he had read sometimes from Confucius, sometimes from the sacred books of India, without especial emphasis, except profound admiration for the spiritual splendors of an Isaiah, or the philosophic penetration of a St. John. Approaching the Testaments, therefore, with the consciousness of their relative rather than their absolute value, she found in them no certain solution of her difficulties, and would put them wearily

## THE LAW OF LIFE

aside as throwing little light on an individual case in a complex modern world.

And indeed she had drifted too far out upon the tides of emotion to reason calmly, to judge with deliberation—how far the walk in the forest had shown her! That she could listen at all, though agitated, suffering, to Waring's proposition that she should sever her marriage tie, revealed what a gulf was between her and the woman even of last September.

Yet consciousness of guilt was swallowed up in life, life overflowing, imperious, drawing her soul to his by a strong, sure current, "too deep for sound or foam."

She went about her daily tasks as if on the eve of some revelation which would light a sinless path out of the narrow house, out of the campus, grown narrow and stifling, into that world of joy and romance, where two, forgetting pain, could remember love. This world took on no definite outlines. Waring filled it, created it.

But the path between them did not open, nor could even romantic imagination divest it of sordid horrors. In her abandonment to emotion the mere leaving of her husband seemed possible, but all the pride of her nature shrank from the necessity of legal proceedings, the vulgar immensity of which hid even the moral aspect. What delicacy or nobility could be left to a love which had been stripped bare before a divorce court! The machinery of the law must inevitably leave its machine stamp upon even God's handiwork. The brand of sin was preferable. She wondered if a true aristocrat had ever been divorced. She thought not.

These questionings, judgments, speculations were generally the fruit of the morning hours, when the brain

## THE LIFE-WARRANT

as a rule is more active than the heart. With the coming on of evening thought was swallowed up in feeling. She opened her soul to Waring, receiving him with the thirst of the day's denial.

With midwinter and the advent of the new year the social life of Hallworth, growing more and more inclusive, made its inevitable demands upon her. She yielded to these sparingly, being seen at a few houses only. Her desire to avoid Waring in society grew with her fear of self-betrayal. Her pleasure of last winter she had taken with spontaneous, joyous freedom; now she felt as if in every assemblage hostile eyes regarded her, sought to read her soul, to drag her secret from her. Perdita, watching her from her citadel of unavowed friendship, feared that Barbara would betray herself by her very cautiousness.

Toward Perdita Barbara felt at times a sudden jealous resentment that she should appear on such good terms with Waring, should have such freedom of intercourse with him. She had always wondered, with the curious humility which seemed but the corresponding depth to the height of her pride, why she, not Perdita, had enslaved him; Perdita, born beautiful, charming, social, possessed of all the qualities by nature which were only faintly hers by grace.

One night she watched the two across the length of Mrs. Maturin's drawing-room. Perdita, gowned in palest blue, with a collar of turquoises about her neck, was seated in a low chair, Waring bending over her, with the silent, repressed look so often his of late; the contraction of the dark, straight brows; the tightening of his lips that told of inner absorption. Barbara had come

## THE LAW OF LIFE

to look for these symbols as the very evidence that he was thinking of her, thinking for her, perhaps.

He glanced from time to time in her direction, but included others in his glance. They had spoken a few words together that evening, commonplaces, which gave both the feeling of struggling with an unknown tongue.

Some one drew her attention, held it, by a long recital of a University happening. The courtesy of looking directly at a person who is talking to you shut out Waring and Perdita for some minutes. When she glanced toward them again the strained expression was out of Waring's face. He was smiling, was at his ease at least for the moment, under some spell, perhaps, of Perdita's charm.

The released look hurt Barbara, gave her the sensation of being alone with her pain. She suddenly hated Perdita.

She rose, stifled by her emotion, and crossed the room to take leave of her hostess, glancing neither to the right nor to the left.

"Mrs. Penfold!"

Perdita's bell-like voice summoned her. She turned, not meeting her eyes, nor Waring's, hesitated, then went toward them.

"You are not going—so early!"

"Yes, I am rather tired," Barbara answered coldly.

"I've been wanting a word with you," Perdita said, with pleading eagerness. "Will you receive with me at the next Hall function? It's to be the last week in February."

Barbara hesitated.

## THE LIFE-WARRANT

"Please say 'Yes.' You would help me out so very much."

"It is good of you. I hardly think I can."

Perdita smiled, undaunted by the frigid little manner.

"Then you must tell me why, lest I grow very unhappy over the wrong reason."

"May I send you word—to-morrow?"

"Certainly. On the condition that it is the word I want."

"You are really going, now—Mrs. Penfold?" Waring said.

"Yes," she answered faintly.

"Dr. Penfold is not—here?"

"No."

"May I have the pleasure of seeing you home?"

"Thank you!—indeed, it is not necessary."

Her accent was a dismissal. She said good-night to them, conscious of a manner too stately for the occasion, and hating herself now more than she could ever hate Perdita, who looked after her with friendly, rather wistful eyes.

"I think—if you will excuse, me, Miss Ravenel—I will see Mrs. Penfold home."

Waring looked for a moment with a curious, questioning gaze into the brown eyes raised to his. How much did Perdita know—or guess—concerning the truth of the gossip against which she was directing her gallant sword-play?

"Indeed, it is not necessary."

"I insist."



## THE LAW OF LIFE

They stood together in the outer hall of Mrs. Maturin's house, separated already, it would seem, by a universe from the world on the other side of the great doors. In his presence the simplicity of one strong emotion governed her. She forgot her jealousy, her distrust. He was hers!

He drew her cloak closer, then they went out into the night, a thick black globe about the circle of the lighted campus. The distance to her home was short. He measured it with jealous eyes.

"Now I can breathe," she said, raising her face to the impenetrable sky.

"You were suffering," he said, in a low voice.

"Was I so transparent?"

"No. I suffered too."

"Once you looked happy—all the strain was out of your face."

"Miss Ravenel was talking of you."

She was silent.

"Barbara!"

"Yes."

"What is the use of prolonging the torture?"

"What do you mean?" she said faintly.

"I mean that if you made your decision, the decision you must make, we could go forward, go forward to honorable action—to the straight path. This groping is torturing us both."

"But what is the straight path?" she cried. "Surely not this."

"This, yes, if it lead there—if not, misery for both of us."

"Lead where?"

## THE LIFE-WARRANT

“To deeds, to action,” he said. “The revelation to—you—to Dr. Penfold of the false relation in which you stand to him.”

“Then?” she asked, in a low voice.

“Wait, we are almost at your house. Can’t we walk up and down the farm road for a few moments? It is deserted at this hour.”

She nodded.

“I should go in, but I must know what it is you have to say to me.”

The farm road lay a few rods back of the campus, and led from the University barns to the University fields. A gate in a hedge behind the houses of the East Avenue admitted them to it. Thick darkness closed them in.

“Do you know the way?”

“Yes, we will walk toward the fields. Take my arm, Barbara.”

“No.”

“Give me your hand, then.”

She gave it to him, and he clasped it tightly in his, which was ungloved. They walked along some moments in silence. The winter world lay silent, entombed under the weight of night.

“Barbara!”

“Yes.”

“It is in your power to take us to the straight path.”

“I know,” she cried. “We are false—false! False to him, false to each other. Oh, do you think it doesn’t torture me; do you think that this doesn’t torture! We are ruining all the beauty of it, all the glory of it, with

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this miserable secrecy. It must end. I must go away for a long, long time—or you must go. God help us, Richard.”

“Is there no other ending but separation?” he said hoarsely.

She suddenly paused in the road.

“Take me back to the avenue.”

“We cannot safely talk there.”

“We cannot safely talk here. If I am damned, I shall be damned openly. This darkness, this hiding, stifles me. I cannot bear it.”

He turned.

“You are right. It is maddening, intolerable, but I tell you, it is in your power to end it, Barbara, to go to the straight road.”

She made no answer, but walked quickly along.

When they reached the avenue she turned her face toward him, pale, suffering, but with a certain radiance of triumph in it.

“Now let us walk here under these lights.”

“We shall meet Mrs. Maturin’s guests.”

“Never mind.”

They were silent for some moments.

“Barbara!”

“Richard!”

“Are you going to ruin two lives—at least?”

“What do you mean?”

“How are you going to settle this?”

“We can’t go on—this way,” she said, in a low voice.

“No, that is sure. It is hateful to us both.”

“I see nothing but—but absolute separation.”

## THE LIFE-WARRANT

"Then you wish—to—ruin—two lives?"

"God help me, no!"

They were at the foot of the path leading to Mrs. Maturin's. Dutton and Allaire were approaching them, and Dutton cried out cheerily:

"Hello, you're going in the wrong direction!"

"We were taking a little walk," Barbara said, turning her face so that the electric light should not fall upon it. "May we—go back—with you! Come, Allaire, walk with me."

The young girl slipped an arm through Barbara's.

"Very dear lady, you look too tired for any exercise not obligatory," she said, with that frankness which never embarrassed. "You promise me to take a drop of the incomparable Amontillado when you get home?"

"Dear Allaire—yes!"

"I was keen to talk with you to-night. Where were you?"

"By the entrance to the picture gallery most of the time."

"Did you see the Lady Perdita? Her gown was supernal. She was *provocante* in that deluding blue."

Barbara smiled.

"You don't think blue her soul-color, then?"

"Not at all. She's royal purple, with just a tiny edge of scarlet."

"And what is my color?"

"You have two—violet and gray."

Barbara gave an unconscious sigh.

"And Mrs. Joyce's is a gay red; and Mrs. Maturin's is green; and Mrs. Cartwright—why her soul is just like a Persian rug. It rests you."

## THE LAW OF LIFE

"Oh, Allaire, what a whimsical little brain you have."

"No; I have the seeing eyes."

"I believe you! Are you never bewildered?"

Allaire hesitated.

"Dear, I'll tell you a secret. I'm nearly always bewildered."

"But you act gay and sure."

"I whistle to keep up my courage."

"Even since—Mr. Dutton——"

"We whistle in chorus—that's the difference. It is nicer."

"I should think so."

The four paused in front of Dr. Penfold's. Dutton looked anxious, perturbed. He shook Barbara's hand warmly, but his manner toward Waring as he bade him good-night was formal and aloof.

Waring himself had become again the guest at Mrs. Maturin's. He made no reference to their interrupted conversation, but proffered commonplaces in full suits of buckram.

At the door, however, he lingered, after their strained good-night.

"To-morrow at the Faculty meeting we take the vote for or against Rebbor's gift. May I come and tell you about it afterward? Dr. Penfold tells me that he will not be present."

"Do you expect to lose—you of the opposition?"

"We expect to win."

Something in the tone of his voice gave to the words a deeper than their obvious meaning, a meaning empha-



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sized by his straight, commanding look into her eyes. The desire to be conquered overwhelmed her. She hurried in lest she should cry out to him "I will do all you say!"

The light streaming out from the study door showed her that her husband was still at work. She went into the parlor and drew a low stool before the fire. Mehitable came to the door and asked if she should light a lamp. She told her no.

His face enthralled her. How every line of it made its own appeal!—the molding of the square, firm chin; of the proud, sensitive mouth; of the clean-cut brow above the deep-set blue eyes, sometimes so boyish, sometimes so old, again lit with their dreams—a patrician face, with the melancholy of the born aristocrat in it. She loved in him that contrast between the unmistakable signs of race and his frankly democratic sympathies, his indifference to wealth, his socialistic idealism.

She could not give him up. Desolation lay that way—the desolation of the empty house, of the places where he was not.

She smiled, thinking of his occasional rudeness and brusqueness toward her, he whose courtesy was traditional. That she had broken through the inviolable general, reached the natural man, was the perpetual miracle of her life, making all things new, wonderful.

How could she give up this bliss, this pain! In either aspect precious because a life-warrant.

Yet go to him or give him up she must. Dalliance was dishonest, unbearable.

If she went to him there was but one road—the road

## THE LAW OF LIFE

of divorce—disgrace, and possible suffering to her husband—if not suffering at least bewilderment, reproach. If she gave him up there could be no half-measures. He must leave Hallworth or she must leave it. As her absence could only be temporary, the obligation fell heaviest on him. Yet could she ask him to make this sacrifice, to give up at once both herself and the University, almost as well-beloved?

She reflected that if she went to him Hallworth could no longer be his home. The University blocked the way wherever she turned. From the vague abstraction of her freshman year it had become almost a sentient being bound up with Waring's honor, with her husband's honor, with the affections of both. Whatever happened to her, Hallworth was lost to Richard. With her or without her he must leave it. The strain upon them had become too great. They could no longer act before their little world, nor trust themselves with each other when the curtain fell.

Exile for a son of Hallworth—and because of her! If she had not sealed their love with her kiss on that fatal September day, would he now stand on the brink of banishment? No. It was inevitable. All her life had led to this—the soft, safe steps of her childhood, the dreams of her girlhood—all to this awakening.

What if she should go up-stairs to that quiet study, enter, call her husband from an incalculable distance, he answering, patient, courteous, waiting for her to speak of some household matter, some social duty. Instead, her blighting word that she did not love him, never had loved him—must leave him now, to go away with Richard Waring, his friend. What madness was

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upon her, upon Richard! Had she killed his honor with her kiss?

“Barbara!”

Her husband's voice called her tremulous, uncertain. At first she thought it an echo of her own perturbed heart. Then again it came.

“Barbara!”

She hastened into the hall. Dr. Penfold was standing at the head of the stairs, peering down into the twilight.

“Is that you, my dear? I called you on the chance of your having come in.”

His voice was husky, and he coughed as he spoke.

She ran up the stairs.

“What can I do for you, Amos?”

“I think I have a cold coming on—and I've got to head it off—somehow. Could you, would you, brew me something hot to drink?”

“Indeed, yes!”

She turned to go down-stairs, then turned back again.

“Have you a good fire in your study? Why, it's out! Go down into the parlor, Amos. This room is as cold as a barn.”

He obeyed with something of the manner of a child glad to be chidden. She followed him with a heavy shawl in her arms. As she tucked it around him, settling him in an armchair before the parlor fire, her hand touched his.

“Why, your hands are like ice!”

He smiled.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

"My dear, I knew it three hours ago, and I hadn't the sense to stop."

"Hold them out to the blaze," she said, stirring the fire vigorously. He watched her with a look of affectionate concern.

"That's fine!"

"Now let me rub them a moment."

"You're good to your poor old husband!"

She turned away her head.

Later she brought him the hot drink he had asked for, watching him take long, comforting sips of it.

"You should have had Mehitabel bring you that hours ago."

"Ah, but she doesn't make it quite like you."

A slow flush mounted to her forehead. She bent over the fire to hide her face from his kind gaze.

## CHAPTER XLV.

### THE CHALLENGE.

IN the morning Dr. Penfold was better, suddenly cured, as he told Barbara, by her inimitable methods. His restoration left her free to begin to expect Waring almost from early morning. The day was his because he was coming to her, at some great hour of its twenty-four.

Afternoon could scarcely bring him, for the Faculty meetings sometimes lasted until dinner. Of the importance of this one she was vaguely conscious, but the issue left her cold. Like Browning's Lazarus, admitted too far into the spiritual world, she had lost the sense of relativity; the confusions which lovers introduce into the temperate order of society being chiefly due to their absolute state of mind.

The evening dragged on. She read Shelley before the parlor fire, trying to fix her thoughts on the words, going back and rereading, because their meaning had passed through her brain as through a sieve.

At nine o'clock the weight of a whole day's expectation bore her down to despair. She closed the book.

But as she rose to go to her room the bell rang, and Waring was ushered in.

As he advanced to greet her, she was conscious of a fog of abstraction about him, of preoccupation, rather, with affairs not emotional. He looked tired, worn, perplexed. A pang of jealousy hurt her, that jealousy of



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the eternal masculine and its engrossing affairs, which more than any other feeling reveals to a woman her essential helplessness.

"I had quite given you up."

"I wanted to finish an editorial I was on, that I might inflict it upon you."

"You look—fagged."

"It doesn't set you up to lose your case."

"You mean——?"

"I mean Hallworth is given into the hands of the enemy."

"Rebbor?"

"Yes, Rebbor and his millions."

His voice was harsh, almost querulous, the lines about his mouth bitter.

"They voted for him, then?"

"They voted for his gift. They'll have to take him with it."

"Is it final?"

"Absolutely."

"Was the majority large?"

"Large enough to show that Hallworth's pretty well dazzled."

She was beginning to forget her claim upon his thoughts in her sympathy with his evident trouble.

"Tell me about it in detail," she said; "tell me first how much capital the University has, and what this gift means to it."

He looked at her, a light of tenderness coming into his tired eyes.

"Would you really like to know about it?"

"I would, indeed."

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"I shall have to go back to the beginning, to the very foundation of Hallworth."

"Do. That's just where I'm ignorant."

She settled herself in her chair. For more than an hour he related the history of the University, in language sometimes vivid with emotion, as if he spoke not of an institution, but of a dearly beloved person, whose growth, not unimpaired by false steps, had been on the whole straightforward, healthy, normal. He pictured John Hallworth to her, as he knew him by tradition, a plain man, but of a life as honorable as it had been industrious and far-seeing.

"A greater contrast to Rebbor you could not imagine than this true American gentleman, building up Hallworth first on his ideals, then on his well-earned fortune. He was no gambler, no trickster, but a poet with common sense, a business man with honor. He gave us land, he gave us wealth; but above everything else he gave us ideals—strong, pure democratic standards. I wish to God he were living now!"

He went on to tell her in detail the conditions of the foundation, the early struggles of the infant institution, then its beautiful, legitimate growth into the fair city of youth which it now was.

As he talked she was conscious, under even the driest portions of the historical narrative, of his repressed enthusiasm for the University, not only the objective reality, but a reverence almost mystical, for "the spiritual city and all its spires," that unseen Hallworth, mother of souls.

If her decision, coming half-way to meet her, yet from which she veiled her eyes, should lack its final

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appeal to him, should she not then invoke the honor of his Alma Mater, as compelling them both to their great refusal. But the hour, with its ultimate misery, was not yet come.

He broke off suddenly.

“What is it? You are not listening. Please come back.”

“Forgive me.”

He nodded, staring into the fire with eyes again aged. He drew a long breath, then went on.

To his belief and knowledge the University did not need Rebbor’s gift, unless to increase those lavish material aids to learning which, brought beyond a certain degree, seemed rather to deaden than to quicken scholarship.

“We might have settled down to ivy and mellow walls, to the real thing, some quietness, some peace—something passive, quaint, yet true, like the Old World learning. But this gift—I won’t talk about its source—that’s all in the editorial you’ll have to listen to—the editorial goes to the main point—but this gift—it sets things going in the machine fashion, the automobile way, which seems to be the only way this country can understand. As if wealth could produce scholars! They think if an endowment is only big enough they can turn out degreed men by the thousand; but money can’t make a man love Horace; nor see tears in Virgil’s eyes.”

He faced his own statement.

“Oh, I know that’s not the whole of it—there’re all the sciences, and the mechanical arts, and the bully good men in those departments need the best Hallworth can give them; but those early fellows, those graduates

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of the seventies, did ripping work on an equipment a freshman would laugh at to-day."

"Did you always feel this way?" she questioned.

"Not when I was an undergraduate playing football. I wanted to go 'round the globe, howling the name of Hallworth. I played football till I nearly killed myself, because I was choked up with the glory of belonging to her, and didn't know how else to work it off. Scholarship seemed too obscure, too inadequate."

She smiled.

"But you did big things."

"I had a faculty for mathematics—and—and Dr. Penfold——"

He broke off, and, leaning over, put some wood upon the fire.

"And now?"

"Now it's the inner glory counts most. It's not money Hallworth wants; it's men who will learn the art of scholarship at her knees—be her jewels."

He smiled at the triteness of the simile.

She sighed.

"Is it scholarship only?"

"What is your meaning?"

"Should Hallworth cherish character?" she said brokenly, menaced by this ideal which he, unconscious of the application she was making of it, had drawn for her. Was it possible that, having this reverence for the University of his love, he had never considered his personal life as capable of reflecting honor or dishonor upon it? No, he must have thought of it, adding thereby to his suffering, his struggle. But she felt compelled to ask him.

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"You mean——?" he questioned, again knitting his brows.

"Scholarship comes first—or does character count as much in the honoring of Hallworth?"

He smiled.

"The President says the University is not a reformatory!"

Again her question faced her.

"What do you think?"

His eyes grew sombre.

"It is too big a question to begin—to answer to-night. We—should never get to the editorial."

He put his hand in his pocket—drew out some manuscript.

"I wrote this, after the meeting."

"After your dinner?"

"I skipped dinner."

"You should not do that." \*

He seemed not to hear her, his eyes glancing down his first page.

"It's only a rough draft, but it'll tell, perhaps, what it's going to be. You are not tired?"

"No."

Again she leaned back in her chair, studying his face, grown these last months singularly ascetic, like, barring its modern expression, that of a monk in some Renaissance canvas. Pain had given a finer chiseling to the features, a deeper setting to the eyes. In them was a look as of a soul suspended, between two fates, two persons, two roles, either of which once entered upon would be played with abandonment; with life and death passion.



## THE CHALLENGE

Her eyes were drawn from his face by the growing consciousness of the import of what he was reading. His voice, hurried, but clear and sharp, bit off the words almost angrily. She listened, first in wonder, then with a trepidation which seemed prophetic of his—martyrdom?—or mere folly.

When he had finished she was silent.

“Well?” he said.

“You can’t publish it. You mustn’t.”

“Why not?”

“Are you sure of your facts?”

“I’ve been gathering them the last three months from unimpeachable sources.”

“Then he is a wicked man!”

“He’s not—St. Francis.”

“He’s a—thief!”

“Yes.”

“But you have said so.”

“Not quite in so many words. I’ve simply given facts.”

“It comes to the same thing. What would the University do to you if you published that record of his business career in *College and State*?”

“I don’t know.”

“You have not thought that far?” she said, with earnest reproach.

“I have thought miles beyond it.”

“It is a terrible risk to run,” she said. “It is noble of you to say why this gift should not be accepted by the University; but if it is futile to protest now, why do it—why risk——”

She hesitated.

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"I want the students to know the facts. The business world already knows them. Hallworth has not become such a despotism that the students might not eventually demand and be granted the displacement of Rebbor."

"With the return of his money?"

"With the return of his money. The one involves the other. What other business could Hallworth possibly have with him?"

She was silent.

"Of course, I do not know the full weight of all these affairs; but since Rebbor has been elected a trustee, and the gift accepted, it seems to me a useless sacrifice—a useless challenge."

"But—I wanted you to know—to feel with me that it is imperative—that I cannot do otherwise than publish this."

She knit her brows, longing to be at one with him.

"It will anger the President," she said.

"Perhaps. He's a cool opponent as a rule—always deadly sure of winning. No doubt he will ignore it. *College and State* is not an official organ of the University."

"But I am afraid——"

She hesitated.

"Of what?"

She shook her head, knowing that her fears were closely bound up with that emotion which was ever sending him into exile, and ever fearful that he should go.

"You see I don't attack him. I don't comment on his gift to the University. That isn't necessary. I simply

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give figures, state facts—facts known from Maine to California by an older generation—not perhaps by these boys.”

“Read it again.”

He did as she asked, this time more slowly. When he finished she said:

“I should like—Dr. Penfold to hear it—if you will!”

He looked at her with an earnest, questioning expression.

“It doesn’t carry conviction to you, then?”

“Indeed, yes! It carries too much; that’s just the trouble!”

“Is Dr. Penfold at work?”

“Yes; but I think he would not mind an interruption.”

She excused herself and went to her husband’s study, most anxious that he should advise Waring not to publish the article. With the keen intuition of love she saw the consequences of its publication. If he were banished from the University it must be a self-imposed banishment, not an official one. She dreaded the precipitation of events, holding out frail hands against them until she herself was calm enough to guide them. That hour was not yet come.

“Amos, Mr. Waring is here. He has written something about John Rebbor for *College and State*. Could you give him a few minutes? I want him to read it to you.”

“Why, certainly. Ask him to come up.”

She called him from the head of the stairs in a voice that was not quite firm.

Dr. Penfold greeted him warmly, as always. For

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Waring he felt a peculiar affection, the result of long association, and of pride in his achievements, as in a sense the fruit of his own.

"They voted Rebbor in, then?"

"Him and his millions—I believe ground is to be broken soon for the new observatory."

"That gem of a telescope does need a better setting."

Waring smiled.

"I'm afraid you're with the enemy."

"I'm on neutral ground, as usual. It takes too much time to be a partisan. Barbara says you've written something about this man."

They settled themselves to listen, Barbara sitting straight and tense in a high-backed chair, her fingers playing nervously with some lace on her gown; her husband and Richard seated in the circle of light made by the student-lamp, both heads near together sharply contrasted in modeling and in expression; one showing the stress of thought, the other of emotion.

Waring read slowly, calmly. This third reading revealed to Barbara a certain perilous cleverness in the mere technique of the article, giving the impression of its deliberate birth.

Dr. Penfold listened with impassive attention. When Waring finished he said:

"As a bit of biography it's good enough for a National Encyclopedia; but, my dear boy, you'll need your courage if it's published!"

Waring smiled.

"My courage is buttoned up tight."

"Do you think it will mend matters if it is published?"

## THE CHALLENGE

"It may stir them up."

"Forgive me, but do you think you can cope with them after they are stirred up?"

"I am counting on support."

Dr. Penfold nodded.

"Rebber's a pretty big factor—I like your courage, but I'm afraid it will be useless."

"Thank you for telling me honestly what you do think about it. I am afraid I'll have to go on with it. From the first the gift, the conditions, everything about it seemed wrong to me. I can't keep still. I think the students ought to know."

"Perhaps—well, I like your pluck, but I don't want to see you in trouble. I couldn't spare you, you know."

His voice held a note of affection. Barbara, trembling with ill-repressed emotion, saw the slow flush mount to Waring's forehead.

She scarcely slept that night. In her husband's house she could not speak to Waring as if she had any claim upon him; could not beg him to defer at least the publication of the article.

She resolved to see him the next day, to ask him in the name of what they meant to each other not to do anything which should imperil his position at Hallworth.

Her husband's lecture-room adjoined Waring's, whose hour was at ten. A few moments before that time she went to Monroe Hall on the chance of meeting him. When she reached the top of the stairs she heard his quick footsteps behind her, turned to see the sudden lighting of his eyes.

"Can I do anything for you?"



## THE LAW OF LIFE

"Yes; come to the ravine bridge this afternoon at four. I must see you."

"It will help me through the day."

She left him abruptly, fearing to meet his students. On the way home her deed confronted her with challenging questions. Was the root of her fear the desire to keep him, not the desire to save him from possible conflict with the University?

On the other hand she discerned recklessness in his determination to publish the article at any cost. Did he really wish to leave Hallworth? Was his courage in exposing Rebbor reinforced by the conviction that he must in any case leave the University? If he left it did he believe that he should not go alone?

Her fears and doubts tormented her. She would ask him frankly when they met what he meant by looking miles beyond the publication of the article.

The day wore into afternoon. A few minutes before four she started on her walk, a tall, slender figure in her dark gown, large dark hat and long gray furs. At her throat was a red rose.

He came to meet her as she crossed the bridge.

"Shall we go the forest road?"

"Yes; but we must keep to it."

He nodded assent.

They walked on for some moments in silence. Then he said:

"What is it that you have to say to me? I have imagined a thousand things. I am afraid my classes suffered."

"Richard!" she said impetuously, "you must not publish that article."

## THE CHALLENGE

“Why?”

“Have you thought that it might end in your leaving Hallworth?”

“Remotely, perhaps.”

“Do you want it to end in your leaving Hallworth?”

“I’d do anything to save the honor of Hallworth.”

“I suppose it is inevitable, anyway,” she said bitterly, “and what we must both face.”

“What are you speaking of?” he demanded.

“Your leaving Hallworth.”

“Would you let me—go alone?”

She was silent, dumb with her miserable fears.

“Would you let me—go alone?” he repeated.

“Oh, don’t ask me! I can’t bear it.”

She felt as if his will, strong because acting for what he believed to be right, was drawing her inevitably to a sinful decision.

“Barbara, I have to bear it. Have you no mercy toward me?”

She stopped in the path.

“I cannot talk any more about it to-day,” she said unsteadily.

“I will turn back now—you go on.”

He was silent.

“Some day I can talk about it, perhaps—in quietness—not yet.”

She turned and left him abruptly. The loneliness always lying in wait for her when she passed from his presence stole a gaunt, gray wolf to her side. She hesitated, looked toward him. He was still standing motionless, his head bared. She turned again, hurried on lest she should go back to him, give him her word.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

### AN APPEAL.

THE Emperor was lying back among the cushions of her divan after a day's struggle with peculiarly stubborn post-graduate work. Her long hair, loosened for rest, framed a face paler even than usual, a white mask for dark emotions—emotions not wholly her own.

Mistrust of her own temperament was habitual with her. Realizing the nature of that personal magnetism which had been a birth-gift, she divined early that she fascinated others but seldom won their affections.

But the temptation to use her power was weakened by her faculty for far perspectives, by a certain genuine wholesomeness deep down in her nature. She would inevitably look beyond possible delirious nights to the grayest of workaday dawns. Her spirit, impenetrable to many as midnight, had an almost religious reverence for the sanities of high noon.

In the University she had earned a reputation for coldness, for essential heartlessness which few knew was in reality self-protection—the protection of others against herself. She would tease them, play with them, make them suffer—if they were men—but they should not lose their souls through her.

In all her life she had met but one person whom, wishing to sway, she could not sway. She had left many be as she found them, because their temperaments

## AN APPEAL

offered no temptation to her, but with this one exception she had ruled where she wanted to rule.

That she had not been able to dominate Barbara when Barbara was a freshman had set the younger woman apart as the recipient of a real affection, her genuine devotion, which, once awakened, took on a changelessness, lifted like death above the accidents of time.

It was of Barbara that she was thinking now. From the evening when she had dressed her for her first dinner-party, only to see her childlike joy killed in an instant by a scholar's preoccupation, she had followed the growth of the tragedy with eyes that missed no slightest detail. Waring himself had become a living daily letter from Barbara, transmitting her moods, her struggles, by his silence, his sadness, his neglect of his work, his occasional irritability—all forms of that unspoken language which the Emperor knew better than any spoken tongue. Working at his side day in and day out, she anticipated by intuition the development of his emotion. That it was approaching a crisis many signs showed her, among them the reckless article on Rebbor's business career.

She had said to him frankly that morning that a Don Quixote's armor might turn out to be but cap and bells. He had smiled, but made no answer. His perfect absence of resentment told her much.

The editorial concerned her less through its possible results to Waring as a member of the University than as an indication of his mood of abandonment.

She did not believe in playing Providence to her friends, knowing that salvation can never be thrust upon you. Moreover she attempted no spiritual flights.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

She was at one with Waring in his unspoken belief that Barbara's marriage, being unnatural, should be dissolved.

But her intelligence was too keen not to perceive that a woman of Barbara's temperament might succumb to temptation, just because in high disdain of such earthly short-cuts to joy as a divorce-court she was treading the heaviest way. The too-weary moment might surprise her, disarm her, send her to his breast.

And he? The Emperor did not think he would willingly dishonor the wife of his friend, but she played no high stakes on any one in love—man or woman. Love, to her mind, made lunatics of people. They did and said the silliest things—that was comedy! They did and said the maddest things—that was tragedy! What moment madness might seize Richard and Barbara was known only to the gods, and with the gods the Emperor liked to tilt.

But save Barbara from the too-weary moment she would if she had to track her very footsteps.

"If she sinned she would kill herself! God knows I must keep her in the world—I need her."

But the thought brought with it the inevitable critical reflection. Was she taking a too highly colored view of the situation, weaving a melodrama without foundation in fact, giving herself up to sophomoric speculation?

No, the danger was real, she had seen enough to see that.

Her question called upon Barbara, and as if in answer the door opened and Barbara herself entered.

"Did you say 'Come in'?"



## AN APPEAL

"Yes, in my thoughts. I did not hear you knock."

"Don't get up."

"I've no intention of getting up. I've worked like a galley-slave to-day—but I'm glad to see you."

Barbara came to the edge of the divan and looked down upon the Emperor. She wore the dress she had worn on the walk that afternoon. Her face above the gray fur looked pinched and negative.

"I thought I should find you here if I came as late as ten. I knew you'd not mind, being an owl, and of course no one ever goes to bed in my home—at least Mehitabel and Dr. Penfold never do."

She spoke in a tired, lifeless voice.

"Take off your hat."

"Can I really stay a while?"

"Until morning if you want."

She removed her wraps, then came again to the edge of the divan. Her manner was nervous, as if she wished to say something and have it over. The Emperor regarded her with non-committal eyes.

"Well, are we aged or young to-night?"

Barbara smiled.

"Old as the Pyramids, and correspondingly tired. May I lie down beside you?"

For answer the Emperor made room.

Barbara hesitated a moment, then stretched herself on the divan with a sigh of weariness, burying her cheek in a cushion.

"How restful this low light is. I must not go to sleep. I have something to ask you."

"What is it?"

## THE LAW OF LIFE

"It is—it is that you will influence Mr. Waring not to publish that editorial."

"So he has read it to you? I'm glad. I don't approve of it myself. Perhaps between us we can persuade him to throw it into the office stove, where it properly belongs."

"Dr. Penfold heard it, too," Barbara went on hastily. "He thinks it is all right in the abstract, but that it is not wise to publish it."

The Emperor nodded. She looked down at the dark head on her arm, wondering how far its thoughts went along with hers.

"I don't know what I can do to prevent it; but I know how you feel—all of us—all of his—friends would want to save him from a battle so hopeless that it's ridiculous. A lost cause is better let alone unless it isn't lost."

Barbara smiled faintly at this bull.

"I'm glad you understand how I—how we feel—Dr. Penfold and—and myself. If it could do any good!"

"It won't," the Emperor said shortly.

Barbara sighed.

They lay still and silent, each absorbed in her own thoughts. At last Barbara spoke.

"Are you sure—quite sure—it wouldn't do any good?"

"Quite sure."

"So it—it is friendly to prevent it?"

"A perfect obligation of friendship."

"And you'll do what you—can?"

"All I can."

"Thank you."

## AN APPEAL

Again they were silent.

"How is Elizabeth?"

"She's not at all well. I made her go to bed early."

A pang of reproach hurt Barbara.

"Has she been unwell long? I so seldom see her."

"She has been feverish and miserable for over a week. It may be nothing more than a heavy cold."

"I hope so. Will you let me know if I can do anything?"

"Yes, Barbara."

"I'll look in to see her to-morrow. I don't want to neglect her—but—but I've been absorbed."

"Yes, Barbara."

Again they were silent.

"Emperor!"

"Yes."

"Could you love—a wicked person?"

"No."

Barbara raised herself to a sitting posture. Her face in the dim light looked pale and strained.

"I must go back," she said.

"Why? Are they expecting you?"

"No one—expects me."

"Barbara?"

"Yes."

"I am about to make a remark that hasn't grown up, but sometimes you and I should forget how old we are."

The faint smile about her lips revealed self-mockery. Barbara turned and looked down at her.

"Well?"

## THE LAW OF LIFE

"It is that if I can ever help you in any way you will let me do it. I think you could—trust me."

"It is myself I cannot trust," Barbara said, then, fearful of involuntary revelation, she rose quickly and made ready to go.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

### THE REPRIEVE.

THE President sat in his library, before his work-table, motionless as the bronze god on a pedestal near him. Among his papers lay a copy of *College and State* face down, its leaves rumpled, as if flung there hastily.

Nothing broke the silence of the room but the ticking of a tall clock, the heavy breathing of a sleeping hound.

Over the face of the man at the desk fleeting expressions followed one the other, each as it came seeming final, about to merge wholly with the fine, scholarly features, then melting away.

At last the look hardened into one of anger—well-bred anger, poised, determined. He took up *College and State* again, turned to a certain page, read.

He laid the magazine down, this time with carefulness. Rising, he paced the long room, his hands behind his back, his head bowed.

He had followed Waring's career with an interest into which the personal element entered largely. This young man was, in a sense, the very embodiment of qualities associated as a rule less with life than with tales of chivalry, and for that very reason, Dr. Hunt thought, out of place in usual society. To afford such a temperament as his you should have a setting of Gothic architecture. The President, a Grecian by nature as well as scholarship, had a horror of all extremes. Waring's medieval tendencies seemed continually veering to the



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superlative. Yet because the young man was, in Dr. Hunt's opinion, a hopeless idealist, he was drawn to him by the attraction of opposites, reinforced by the genuineness of his intellectual gifts. Disapproving of the principle inculcated in *College and State*, the President was won over in spite of himself by a cleverness so flattering to the University. Beginning with admiration of Waring's talents, he ended by unmanifested affection for the man himself.

A keen observer of the members of the Faculty in their social as well as in their official life, Waring's devotion to Mrs. Penfold had not escaped the President's eye. But his only judgment was a kind of cynical amusement over the phenomenon, as confirming his belief that chivalry has its essential dangers.

Waring's opposition to Rebbor's gift he had counted upon, but looked for an end of it with the final vote of the Faculty. That he should dare to expose the business career of the new trustee in his magazine was beyond his wildest conception.

He paced up and down the room, revolving plans of action. Melampus, imperturbable but not unsympathetic, watched his master from the hearth-rug.

At last the President went out into the hall, and put on his hat and coat, resisting his impulse by the feigned intention of a walk to the library, but knowing full well his inevitable goal.

He found Perdita reading a German novel in her drawing-room. Her copy of *College and State* lay on the table uncut.

After a few moments of desultory conversation he pointed to the magazine.

## THE REPRIEVE

"Richard Waring distinguishes himself in this new number."

"Does he—how?"

"He gives a detailed account of John Rebbor's business career."

"Not really!"

Perdita sat up straight in her chair. Under her astonishment was a quick throb of sympathy for such daring.

"It is of course interesting reading," the President went on dryly; "but its audacity is untimely."

"He has certainly the courage of his convictions!"

She reached for the magazine, turned to the article, ran over it once or twice, drawing her breath in with a little gasp of astonishment.

"Heavens! Is it true?"

The President shrugged his shoulders.

"I suppose he has been careful in the sifting of his facts."

"The lover of Giorgione's monk the hero of this record!"

The President smiled.

"So it seems. Hallworth, I'm afraid, will have to dispense with Mr. Waring's services. This is unnecessary, uncalled for."

"But not untrue," she said, in a low voice.

"My dear lady, that isn't the point!"

"You honestly don't think it is?"

"No; I do not. We are not concerned with this record—we never were. It is indecent of this boy to fling it in the face of Hallworth."

"You mean the deed's indecent, not the record."

## THE LAW OF LIFE

"Oh, as for the record, what business bears examination in these days?"

"So you are going to punish him?"

"It is inevitable."

"Wait," she said softly. "Take no notice of it whatever. Watch for the effect."

"You think silence——?"

"Oh, silence is best. He should have published it before, not after, the vote—but silence is best—at present."

"If John Rebbor should see it?"

"He's not likely to. Isn't he still abroad?"

"I don't think I can pass this by."

She looked at him long and earnestly.

"I ask it."

He rose, paced up and down the room, went to the windows, turned to her at last.

"Very well—but I shall keep the axe suspended over this amazingly clever head!"

"And warn me before you cut the thread?" she said, smiling.

"And warn you before I cut the thread."

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### THE CRUCIFIX.

THE silence of the President passed unnoticed among the voices of the University commenting upon Waring's article. The members of the Faculty, whether they agreed with the writer's theories or not, were unanimous in condemnation of his unnecessary recklessness. The household of Hallworth, having admitted Rebbor, felt in honor bound to support him. This ebullition of youth gave them the sensation of a sudden discovery that all the members of the family had not grown up.

With the students, on the other hand, Waring grew in stature until he overshadowed even the President. What his peers called recklessness they called courage and honor. He himself had hard work to escape the various offerings of their enthusiasm. He had not counted on its taking the form of personal devotion. That they should waylay him on the campus, in the library, in the lecture-room, to ask him questions, to shake his hand, to tell him how much they admired his honesty, seemed to him a pitiable diversion of force from its proper goal. He set himself at once the difficult task of focusing this enthusiasm where the conflagration was most necessary, telling them when they asked what was to be done that the removal of Rebbor and the return of his money was in their power, if they only exercised it rightly. In consequence, though the League took no

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official notice of Waring's article, it was the uppermost topic whenever students met.

That he shrank from their admiration was not due alone to his desire that they should turn their exclusive attention to the new trustee, but from the instinctive, deep-buried feeling that he himself was scarcely the man to pose as a champion of honor. His self-knowledge, however, bore as yet only the fruit of a determination to have his way with Barbara. He would exercise the utmost enchantments of their mutual passion to wring from her her consent to a divorce.

He told himself a hundred times a day that her unnatural marriage, whatever her relations with her husband, was unholy, impossible, the worthiest object for the charity of the law. He told himself that her mental and moral development, to say nothing of his own joy, depended on her marriage with him. Already she was the wife of his spirit. That she should be his wife before the world was a duty owed to society, sadly in need of married lovers.

He sometimes pictured her in their future home. "We two shall live at once one life, and peace shall be with us."

He should train her intellect. That she had the clear, logical mind of a man under all her femininity was a source of constant joy to him. Unlike many highly educated men, the domestic woman—domestic and nothing else—did not appeal to him. A wife who could dress charmingly, and at the same time read Greek, was his ideal.

He saw her receiving in his house, entertaining his guests; again in sweet domestic attitudes reading to him,



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tending flowers, sitting at his feet with her dear, dark head upon his knees.

Across these visions fell the shadow of the necessary, perhaps brutal, battle for her consent to the divorce.

A week had passed since the publication of his article. Press of work, desire to starve her into compliance with his wishes, had kept him away from her.

He sat in the office, reading proof impatiently; because he had gained his own consent to go to her that afternoon. He laid it down at last, becoming conscious of the Emperor's fixed gaze upon his face.

"Well!" he said with some impatience. "Have you penetrated to the secrets of my soul?"

She laughed.

"The discovery wouldn't be worth the fatigue."

He laughed too. Laughter had long ago prevented a romance between himself and the Emperor.

"You've never mentioned the Rebbor article to me since it was published," he said.

"You are already gorged with adulation—gorged into torpidity. I won't help to damn you with my approval."

He smiled faintly.

"You're more varieties of a brick than any woman I ever knew."

"One of them may hit your head some time."

"I shouldn't care. The world would be rid of one more sinner."

"Well, whatever you do, play a square game," she said.

He blinked, as if a brick had already struck him between the eyes.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

"You'll finish this proof for me," he said quietly. "I have a call to make this afternoon."

"No, I'll not finish it! You've overworked me till I'm a subject for the S. P. C. A. Take me calling with you, I'm in need of social refreshment."

He smiled.

"Well, come along, if you want to."

"May I ask your goal?"

He looked her in the eyes.

"Mrs. Maturin's."

Mrs. Maturin and Perceval were together in her drawing-room. She was seated by the fireplace, he standing near her, one arm resting upon the carved mantel. Her face was pale, passively sad. Active suffering was in his.

"You have made your final decision?" she was saying slowly. "You are leaving Sparta this June?"

"Yes. I go to New York about the third week."

She drew a long breath.

"May I—is it impertinent of an old friend to ask why you give up St. Jude's?"

"No," he answered. "You may ask me—anything. It is because——"

He hesitated, then looked her directly in the eyes.

"It is because—I love you."

She looked down—was silent for a moment.

"And you go into exile—for me?"

"There is no other way," he said in a low voice. "I cannot stay here and face you and hopelessness. Unless you tell me that it is not hopeless."

## THE CRUCIFIX

She looked up at him, wistfulness in her face—reflected light of her love for another.

“It is hopeless,” she said, her words almost inaudible.

“Then nothing remains for me but to say farewell.”

He held out his hand.

She rose.

“I keep your friendship?” she said pleadingly.

He was silent.

“I cannot lose you as a friend.”

“I think—I think you can depend on my friendship.”

They faced each other a moment, then he raised her hand to his lips.

When he was gone she walked restlessly about the room, going first to one window, then to another. His face haunted her as it had looked at her out of his loneliness; a loneliness differing in kind, her instinct told her, from that of a mere rejected suitor. Surrounding Perceval like an atmosphere was the strangeness of some extraordinary experience of his past life, which known would explain the anomaly he was; priest, man of the world, skeptic, believer; and above all, one who had drunk the cup of pain to its dregs. In sending him away, she knew it was into no accessible wilderness, and her heart bled for him; but she was of those lovers for whom death but confirms enchantment. Her refusal of Perceval was fore-ordained in her acceptance of Maturin.

For many reasons she wished to keep his friendship. She had, as a rule, little love of priests, mistrusting

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their hybrid character, and believing that the true apostolic succession is through the lives of holy men. Perceval was the only one she had ever known who seemed to her not in his office, but in his personality, to offer access to the spiritual world.

Her musings were broken in upon by the announcement of two callers.

Waring and the Emperor entered. She had perversely accompanied him to make him bear the full penalties of his lie to her. His mask of courtesy hid a resentful wonder as to how he should politely rid himself of his companion when this call was over. He must see Barbara before dinner.

Mrs. Maturin greeted him with her accustomed graciousness. She had read his article with regret for what seemed to her wasted enthusiasm, not unmingled with an admiration of the young man's courage which she would not join with the opposing forces in calling bravado.

She spoke of it to him now in friendly appreciation, but he shied from the subject.

The Emperor looked amused. She knew Waring well enough to feel the ill-humor under his somewhat elaborate courtesies.

Mrs. Maturin, hiding her own preoccupation successfully, talked of one matter and another, until the usual University topics were exhausted.

The Emperor was about to end the call, thinking her editor had been punished long enough, when Mrs. Joyce was announced.

The little lady's attitude toward Barbara and Waring had been of late not active charity indeed, but at

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least a suspension of malice, due to Perdita's influence—the one strong balance-wheel in her irresponsible life.

She pounced on Waring now with the joy of one who sees another outlet for pent-up teasing.

"How do you do, Sir Lancelot! Herbert punished me the other day for an overdone steak by reading me the whole of Rebbor's past life as you have presented it. As a biographer I think you'd make your fortune."

"Spare me Rebbor and all his works," Waring said.

"Mr. Waring has fought a good fight," Mrs. Maturin interposed; "but I'm afraid John Rebbor has come to stay."

"Of course, you saw it before it was published," Mrs. Joyce said, turning to the Emperor.

"I was an unwilling godmother to it—yes."

"Don't you approve?"

"Not at all."

Mrs. Joyce laughed, showing her sharp, even little teeth.

"And you flew in the face of a lady, Mr. Waring?"

"The board of editors is not divided into sexes."

"Well, I liked it—to be honest. I hope you won't be sent to Siberia."

Waring laughed.

"I'm not of so much importance."

Mrs. Maturin turned the conversation. He looked grateful. When the call was over and he was free to go to Barbara, he found that she was out. He wondered how much the Emperor knew or suspected. Was she trying to baffle him?

During the past week Barbara had run the whole



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gamut of bewildered emotion. Beginning at the height of renunciation, she had gradually descended by steps of pain and longing to the simple, elemental need of him. She was almost ready to do anything he asked of her.

On this afternoon, when unknown to her he was intending to go to see her, her misery drove her at last from the house. She walked up and down the streets of the town, making some errands to do there. She had reached the stage when lonely places seemed full of sinister menace to her. Unless he was with her she was afraid of being near the walls of the ravines or near deep water.

She walked up and down the streets of the town, now gray and dank and forlorn with late, dripping winter—found herself at last near St. Jude's.

Its open doors were an invitation to her weariness. She entered. The deep twilight, broken with rich, mystic color from the narrow windows, received her mercifully.

She entered a pew, and sat there for some time before she became aware that she was not alone in the church. Then through the twilight she saw the kneeling form of a man, his head buried in his hands, his body tense, motionless.

She thought it was Perceval, but she was not quite sure. The moments passed. The man rose at last and came slowly down the aisle like one in a dream. She saw it was Perceval.

She rose and went to meet him, wondering at the pallor of his face; its look of pain.

He held out his hand to her.

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"How are you to-day, Mrs. Penfold?"

The obvious conventional reply came to her lips, but she could not utter it.

"Not very well?"

"Tired, I think."

He nodded, his grave eyes looking searchingly into her face.

"Come into the study, and have a cup of tea before going up the hill."

"Thank you—I will come."

She followed him passively.

When they reached the study he placed an armchair before the fire; then rang and ordered tea.

She leaned back in the chair, closing her eyes for a moment. Because he too suffered she longed to tell of her suffering.

"Mrs. Penfold, I am afraid you are not happy."

His quiet voice, vibrant with sympathy, released her.

"I am wretched!" she cried, "and—and I'm not like you, I can't pray."

He was silent, knowing his attitude in the church had signified not prayer, but pain.

"Were—you ever—bewildered?"

"Yes," he said.

"Did you ever want something and—have to give it up?"

He rose and went to the window, turning his face away. He did not answer her.

"Did you ever—sin?"

He turned to her again.

"Would I dare to be speaking to you—this way——" he said quietly, "if I had not known both sin and pain."

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"You say you've sinned, you've suffered. What was the outcome?"

The misery in her eyes challenged him.

He reached for a little crucifix of wood hanging near his desk. He handed it to her. Her fingers closed over it tightly.

"I cannot speak to you," he said, "in the language of the Church. I know something—you once told me something of your early education. I speak to you in the tongue which you—and perhaps I know best. I speak of pain."

"Yes," she said faintly.

"But—but it has a meaning!"

"You've found it?"

"I could not escape it. Whatever you are going through or will go through in this life, whatever you learn, whatever you suffer—whatever knowledge, wisdom," he hesitated, "love comes to you, you will know sooner or later that all life centres there—all roads lead there—to the symbol you hold in your hand—it is the price paid for the triumph of the spirit over the flesh, of the higher over the lower, of the social over the individual, of light over darkness."

"It is hard," she said piteously.

"It is death itself."

"I want life."

"You will get it."

"I may get life," she said, in sudden, fierce challenge; "what you call life, perhaps; but I shall not be happy."

"I did not promise you happiness. You will probably be very miserable."

## THE CRUCIFIX

“You are!”

“Yes.”

“Yet you give me this!”

She raised the hand which held the crucifix.

“Yes.”

The hand dropped. She leaned over, gazing into the fire.

When the tea was brought he poured out a cup for her and took it to her. She shook her head.

“You must drink it,” he said, with quiet authority.

She took the cup from him. Her left hand still held the crucifix rigidly.

He stood by the fireplace while she drank her tea, talking to her on indifferent subjects. When she had finished she rose—calmer.

“I must go,” she said. “You have been very kind to me. I may not do as you say, but I thank you.”

He smiled.

“You will win.”

She hurried through the twilight, still clasping the little crucifix. The words Perceval had spoken aroused in her only deeper revolt; but this symbol of pain she could at least understand, whatever mystical interpretation he put on it.

She did not at once go toward the University, but walked quickly along the almost deserted side streets. The day had closed in a dank, dripping fog which rolled in from the lake, covering the town in a gray mantle. Through it lights shone faintly, objects loomed large and shapeless.

It was the hour of the day when her need of Waring

## THE LAW OF LIFE

was keenest. Morning brought its duties, night its finalities; but at twilight the world went home, and she was homeless.

Could she resist his plea?

The publication of his article on Rebbor a fortnight after her appeal to him not to publish it had shown her, as many other things had shown her, that in the final struggle the strength of his will was to be counted upon as a dread factor.

The course of events was weakening her power of resistance. With the intuition of love she was aware of the condemnation visited upon him for his reckless attack upon the new trustee. Partly from what her husband had told her, partly from what others had betrayed to her in chance conversations, she knew that in the Faculty at least he stood alone. His possible peril was calling her to him with the strongest of all appeals—to stand by the beloved when others turned away, critical or hostile.

But how go to him? Must she face divorce?

“Barbara!”

The voice was the Emperor’s. She had emerged from the mist, suddenly, mysteriously, so it seemed to Barbara, taken by surprise.

“I did not see you coming!”

“Probably not. Your eyes saw nothing nearer than the lake.”

“Are you going up the hill?”

“Yes. I’ve been to the hospital to arrange for Elizabeth’s going there to-morrow!”

“She’s ill?”

“She’s run down—has had one cold after another.



## THE CRUCIFIX

I've been trying to persuade her to give up for several days. This afternoon when I came back from calling on Mrs. Maturin I found her with fever. I didn't ask her permission. I went straight to the hospital. There at least she'll have to keep quiet."

"Poor little girl," Barbara said softly, but it did not seem to the Emperor as if she quite grasped the fact.

She took no notice of what Barbara held in her hand. They went up the hill together almost in silence. When they parted Barbara said:

"Let me know if I can do anything," but her voice was perfunctory, abstracted.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

### HUSBAND AND WIFE.

SHE had come to the stage when she could think calmly of a divorce and of the steps which should have to be taken to obtain it. This calmness was negative, a refuge from pain by the diversion of her thoughts to a new course of action. Two nights after her first visit to Perceval she met Waring at a dinner. His changed appearance frightened her. He looked thin, worn, anxious. They had opportunity for only a few conventional words together until the moment of leave-taking, then, standing a little apart from the others, he said to her:

“I must see you alone. You must tell me what I want to know.”

His manner toward her had lost all chivalrous aroma, but its well-nigh brutal directness told her of heart-breaking sincerities.

She went home, resolved to speak with frankness to her husband; to tell him that, loving Waring, and not himself, she desired to take the clean, straight course—to be divorced from him and marry his friend.

But, pausing before his study door, her courage failed her, and she turned away, going to her own room. A simple incident had haunted her for days, his gratitude on the night when she had made him a hot drink to ward off a chill. She remembered how he had looked up

## HUSBAND AND WIFE

at her with a kind of childlike trust and confidence—hers to destroy now with one word.

She wished that he was a jealous husband, demanding from her the full obligations of her wifehood. From an exacting man, from one in love with her, it would have been easier to separate. The very freedom she enjoyed appealed to her sense of protection and, years younger though she was, to her maternal instinct.

He had told her once that never again should she go through the pain and peril of child-bearing, unless by her own will and wish. His very bewilderments that strange first year of marriage in the contemplation of a natural but disturbing fact seemed to awaken in him the desire not only to protect her but to shield the sanctity of his scholarship from such marital distractions. No wife could have greater freedom—a freedom, indeed, of absolute girlhood. But this very liberty bound her hand and foot.

She went into her room and sat down on the edge of her bed. From beneath the pillow something protruded. It was the crucifix. She took it, held it at arm's length, looked at it curiously, then put it down with a gesture almost of contempt. How easy, she thought, to die physically upon a cross of wood. Had this Man ever loved?—ever renounced?

Yet the image made its appeal to her by its look of very helplessness—something for which the world had been too strong. Baffled and conquered this Man had been, whatever the Gospels proclaimed of Easter triumph. With miracles she had nothing to do. They were not worked for a modern generation. But the cross, at least, was a fact. He did suffer on it, and He did die.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

So much was history in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being Governor of Judea and Herod Tetrarch of Galilee.

Why had He died? Her uncle's explanation of this fact which had changed the course of history lay in its political significance; Jewish resentment not of kingship because it was contrary to the law of the empire, but of kingship because it was spiritual, therefore to be betrayed into the hands of the oppressor. She thought of the day when he had said these things to her, a summer day, with dear garden odors drifting in through the open windows; he seated at his desk, she perched on a window-seat hemming towels. What a gulf between that child and the woman of the present!

Why had Christ died? Could He have escaped had He wished? Did He see the toils closing in about Him; did He feel life becoming more difficult, the way harder to tread? Why did He submit? Why did He die? From what she had read of the Gospels it seemed that He might have escaped had He wished. Was this helplessness after all voluntary?

She picked up the crucifix again, gazed at it, laid it down with a sigh. He was dead, dead centuries ago. She could ask him nothing.

How should she tell Amos Penfold to what lengths she wished to go to straighten out her life?

The thought came to her that if she told him the situation, the bare fact that she loved Waring, he might come to her aid with the solution. Ruskin had given his wife in that way to Millais.

But would the solution of divorcee occur to this child-like scholar? And even if it did, would not his whole

## HUSBAND AND WIFE

life be wrenched violently out of its peaceful course by the shock of the revelation? If only he had not been kind to her! She wished that he had beaten her, abused her.

She fancied herself gone from him. Would he go back to his learning as to a physician capable of healing all wounds, if wounds there were, or would he be troubled, bewildered, as he had been at the sight of her physical sufferings; too bewildered ever again to work in the old, calm way?

Yet Waring's worn face called her. Their love, whether they yielded to its imperious demand or not, had become a fact of life, one with the shining of the sun and the falling of the rain, elemental, eternal.

Such love was sacramental. Her husband must release her.

She rose, and went again to the study door, this time tapping with a firm hand; but his gentle "Come in" again robbed her of her courage.

The scene before her was most peaceful in its suggestions of a scholar's quiet toil. The room was in deep shadow save where the student-lamp shed its circle of mellow light. In this circle her husband sat, his massive head bent over some papers. Absolute quiet reigned.

"Amos," she said, her voice trembling, "may I talk with you a little? Are you very busy?"

He looked up, saw her standing there in the outer twilight, with an expression in her face that at once compelled his attention. His mind went by a curious suggestion back to an August day, a stifling noon, a darkened room, her eyes gazing up at his in strange, incomprehensible anguish.



## THE LAW OF LIFE

“Are you busy?” she repeated.

“Not too busy to talk to you, my dear. You don’t look well—have you been well? March is a hard month.”

He rose and brought a chair for her; as she sank into it his hand by accident touched hers.

“Why, your hands are cold—almost as cold as mine were that night I thought I was in for it. Let me get you some of the Amontillado.”

“No, no, it is too precious, and it is nearly all gone!”

“It is not too precious for Barbara,” he said, smiling.

She watched him as he took the flask from a cabinet and poured out a tiny glassful, bringing it to her with a solicitous air.

“Were you dining out to-night?” he asked, seeing that she was in evening-dress. “I didn’t go down to dinner. Mehitabel brought me a bite up here.”

“Yes,” she said, “I was dining out.”

Her courage was ebbing away, and even the warmth of the Amontillado stealing through her veins could not restore it. She sat miserably silent.

“What is it, my dear? What did you come to tell me?”

She looked at him fixedly for a moment.

“Amos,” she said, her voice uncertain, “did you—did you ever regret marrying me?”

He gazed at her in amazement.

“My dear, what a question!”

“Do I—do I mean anything to you? Could you—live as well—without me?”

“Why, Barbara, you’re not happy, child. What has happened?”

## HUSBAND AND WIFE

Terror seized her. She began to tremble in every limb. He saw it.

"My dear, you are ill!" he said, hastily rising and coming toward her.

"Oh, no, not ill. Tell me if I mean anything to you—if I'm necessary to you—couldn't you work better if you were all alone again? What am I here?—what am I?"

He stood for a moment in utter bewilderment, then he said:

"You know what you are, Barbara. Child, don't tremble so. Has any one hurt you—has any one said to you that you're neglected?" He sighed. "My dear, you should understand me better than that."

"No one has said anything," she murmured. "But if I meant anything to you—I might—I might——"

"You might what——?"

"I don't know—live—die—I don't know!"

His bewilderment deepened; conscience reproached him. After all she was left very much to herself. Had any one been saying things to her?

"Barbara, listen. I'm not a model husband, but my absorption does not mean that I forget you; only that the habit of continual work, once acquired, is harder to break than the morphine habit. I've the vice of scholarship. No one knows it better than I, but——" he added, with sudden whimsical worldliness, which sounded oddly from his lips, "you might be married to a man who drank, or who—forgive me—left you for other women."

His last words stung her.

"Do you believe," she said, "that a man should be

## THE LAW OF LIFE

as faithful to his wife—as—as—a wife should be to her husband?"

He pondered.

"Well, my dear, it is a beautiful theory, but you must not judge too strictly in this world. Man is a polygamous animal."

She drew a short, sharp breath. Would Richard forget her at last—go on to other women?

"Then a thing is never black or white."

"Yes—to youth."

"And to age—to experience?"

"Infinite gradations of gray."

"I don't want it so," she said desperately, feeling another prop being taken from her. "I don't like a world where everything can be excused, because it's neither quite black nor quite white."

Her husband mused.

"Well, I suppose one learns charity by such recognition. If we went around looking for saints or sinners we'd run into blunders."

"Perceval's a saint!"

"Yes, I guess he is."

She was wondering if she should bring this theory of charity home to him by a narration of her difficulty how he would act. The words struggled to her lips—died there.

His face, patient, kindly, concerned, stood between her and her goal.

"Amos, you began to tell me about yourself—as—as—a husband. Tell me what I mean to you?"

He gazed at her, the abstraction gone from his face.

"You mean—my home."

## HUSBAND AND WIFE

She was not prepared for that word. Resentment of it filled her.

"I don't quite understand," she faltered.

"I haven't gifts of language, Barbara; but until I married you I really had no home. Mehitabel took good care of me, yes, but I was often lonely. You have taken away that sense of loneliness."

She said nothing, bowed under the realization that she could no more speak to him of divorce than she could fly.

"But don't worry over what you mean to me," he went on with kindly accent; "and remember that you are not really neglected; because, even if you are not always in my thoughts, you are always in my heart."

It was a good deal for him to say, and it left him embarrassed. He bent over his papers, a slow flush mounting to his forehead.

She rose.

"Thank you, Amos—perhaps—some day——"

She hesitated.

"Are you going to bed, my dear?"

"Yes; it is almost midnight."

After she had gone he plunged again into his work, but from time to time her face came between him and the paper. When the University clock was striking two he rose to go to his room, feeling that his restlessness made further work that night unprofitable. Her door was open, and, as he passed it, he felt impelled to go in, to see if she were sleeping.

He went back for the student-lamp; then stepped

## THE LAW OF LIFE

quietly to her bedside, holding his hand before the light that it might not reach her face.

She was lying in a childlike attitude on her side, one hand under her cheek. The other lay outside the coverlet, the loose sleeve of her nightgown thrown back, revealing the white, rounded arm.

Something dark was in this hand. He bent lower, holding the lamp a little nearer. Then he saw it was a crucifix.

He softly placed the lamp upon the table and seated himself where he could see her face. The presence of the image in her hand he at once connected with her strange questions. Where had she obtained it, and why did she hold it in that tight grasp? He had never known a woman freer from superstition. Was she so unhappy?

He felt concerned, anxious. His steady gaze upon her face at last produced the usual result. She moved uneasily, opened her eyes, then started up in bed, saying:

“What is it? Am I ill?”

“No, dear. I was watching your sleep. I am sorry I woke you—I was afraid—you were not happy.”

She sank back again on the pillow with a long, shuddering sigh.

“Tell me, if you can, what is the matter?” he said anxiously.

“No! No! No!”

“Can you not tell me?”

“If I did I should be sorry in the morning,” she said, in a voice old with its finality.

“Shall I stay with you—sit by you here until you get to sleep?”



## HUSBAND AND WIFE

She looked at him steadily, then gave him her free hand. He took it and she turned away her head.

But after a while he fell asleep in his chair. Her own vigil lasted until morning. She watched him sleep, still grasping his hand as tightly as in the other she grasped the crucifix.

## CHAPTER L.

### THE CRISIS.

FOUR days passed. In that time she did not see Waring. From her husband she learned that he was absent at a neighboring college, where he was lecturing on some political topics.

The Emperor came with the news that Elizabeth had pneumonia, was indeed very ill. Barbara heard it with a strange, apathetic indifference. Bodily illness seemed such a little thing.

The morning mail of the fifth day brought her two notes. One was from the Emperor, hastily scribbled in lead-pencil on the hospital paper.

"Elizabeth's condition is serious," it ran; "the crisis is looked for to-morrow or next day. She wants to see you. I've wired her people in California to come on."

The other was from Waring.

"Barbara, I must see you quite alone, where we can talk freely. I come down on the Lake Local to-morrow—will get off at Heustons and walk to the boat-landing. Be there at three. If it is mild we can go on the lake, if not we can walk into the country. I must have your word. Richard."

She sat for a long time gazing at this note, feeling the power of his will under the terse sentences, with their ring of command. She knew that she would go.

## THE CRISIS

She must go, she said to herself, to tell him that she could not give him her word. She could not be divorced from her husband. Beyond that telling she would not look.

She read and reread the words until they were fixed in her mind, then she put the note in the fire.

The Emperor's letter filled her with confused regret, from which one fact stood out clearly, that she was averse to going to Elizabeth. She told herself that she would go to-morrow, not to-day, or perhaps after she had seen Waring—not before. She dreaded she knew not what emotional influence which the sight of suffering might exercise upon her, and she wished to be held firm to her purpose.

During the morning she went to the florist, bought there bride-roses and forget-me-nots, and sent them to Elizabeth, with a card to the Emperor on which she wrote:

“I cannot come until evening—it is impossible.”

At half-past two that afternoon she stood before her mirror making ready for her departure. She wore the darkest, plainest clothes she possessed, and was now tying a thick veil across her face.

She knew she would go, yet at this last moment she hesitated, nervously picking up and putting down again the little toilet things on her bureau. She looked for some intervention outside her own will.

On the stairs she met Mehitabel with a note from the Emperor.

“Come at once. They do not think Elizabeth can live through the night.”

She stood irresolute, read the note again, looked at

## THE LAW OF LIFE

her watch. It was twenty-five minutes to three. Even if she made close connections with the lake trolley she would be late.

"I can't go to her. I'm not fit to go to her," she thought; then with the quick knife of a desperate will she killed the tenderness that with feeble, clinging, dying hands was overmastering her. Turning to Mehitabel she said:

"Miss King is very ill. I may go to the hospital about dinner time—may stay late—tell Dr. Penfold."

She heard the trolley coming and hastened out to hail it. On the way to the town she sat rigidly in her seat, her lips compressed. When she changed cars she hurried across the street, looking straight ahead of her lest she should see some one she knew.

Only two persons beside herself were in the lake trolley, and these left the car before it was out of the town. Then she breathed more freely.

And now it flew through the meadows brown and sodden with departing winter. The bare boughs of the willows were lifted against a white sky from which a dull, steady wind was blowing. In the distance the great lake unrolled steely waters, touched here and there with white. If they could but go down together breast to breast into its merciful depths!

The flash of the high fall in the farther ravine was seen for an instant as the car crossed a bridge. Now the hills drew nearer, the lake seemed to rise, to expand. From the end of the car-line to the boat-landing was a walk of three minutes along a stretch of graveled beach upon which little waves broke fretfully. Beyond this bay the uneasy waters of the lake moved to the dull,

## THE CRISIS

steady wind. Toward the horizon line the white sky deepened into gray.

He came to meet her, pale and enveloped in silence. In silence they took each other's hands.

The old fisherman who rented the boats was bending over one, adjusting its oars and cushions. Once he cast an anxious glance over the water.

"It's goin' to be dirty weather," he said. "I ain't advisin' you to stop out longer than necessary, Mr. Waring. It don't feel cold just standin' or walkin', but you soon get numb on the water. Have you 'nouv wraps, Mrs. Penfold?"

Barbara thanked him. She was warm enough, she said.

"If it turns cold we may walk back from Saunders's or the Point, and send the boat by a boy," Waring said.

"Very good, sir. Or if you make it Saunders you can leave it with Michael."

Waring put her into the stern, tucking a rug about her. Then he got in and took the oars.

"You will steer?"

"Yes."

They pushed off. As the boat cleared the end of the landing he said in a low voice:

"We'd better not attempt to talk on the lake. We'll land somewhere—shall it be the Point? It is quite deserted, but there is shelter there should it rain—cottages."

She turned away her head.

"I don't care where—only take me out of sight of Hallworth."



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In the room where Elizabeth lay the hush had descended which seems the palpable expression of the resignation or despair of those assembled to watch the going out of life. Beside the bed Frederick Clyde sat, as he had sat for hours, motionless, seeing nothing but her face. The physician and nurses still went on with their ministrations, but in the spirit of duty, not hope.

At the window the Emperor sat, her grief for Elizabeth overshadowed by her anxiety for Barbara. Since receiving her message she had been oppressed by vague apprehensions. Knowing Barbara's temperament, always delicately responsive to sorrow or pain, she was sure that only some crisis could make her disregard a dying friend's wish. Her second urgent appeal was less in behalf of Elizabeth, who since midnight had recognized none of them, than in behalf of Barbara. For some days she had faced the fear of her imminent peril.

She was watching for her now. Nearly an hour had passed since she had sent the note. If there was no answer within a very few minutes she was resolved to go herself to Dr. Penfold's.

Her restlessness, if nothing else, demanded it. The vague dread possessing her made further waiting impossible.

She rose at last and went to one of the nurses. "I must go out for a few moments. Is the end very near?"

"She is dying, but the end may not come for several hours."

The Emperor went to the bed and bent over Elizabeth, pressing her lips an instant to the soft brown hair, matted and damp with the dews of coming death.

In the hall she met Perceval, who came every day to

## THE CRISIS

see Elizabeth—one of his parishioners. During these visits certain traits of the Emperor had not escaped his notice—the dog-like fidelity under her brusque manner, the exceeding gentleness of her ministrations to her friend, her challenging honesty, breaking through the surface complexities of her temperament as through iridescent cobwebs. She had won his liking in the face of certain prejudices against her, holding him he knew not why.

“Is she better?”

“There was a change for the worse last night. She can only live a few hours.”

“Poor little girl!”

The Emperor turned her face sharply away.

“You are going out for a breath of air?”

“I am going for Mrs. Penfold. If I do not return very soon, can you stay to be—with Frederick should the—end come suddenly?”

“I will stay until the end.”

He saw the apprehension in her face. For which friend was it? Dimly he divined that it was not for the one drifting out to the unknown sea.

When she reached Dr. Penfold's Mehitabel told her that her mistress had received the second message just as she was leaving the house; that she had spoken of going to the hospital, but not at once.

“Did she say where she was going first?”

“No; Miss Dare, she didn't.”

The Emperor turned away with a heavy heart. Why should Barbara delay going to a death-bed, if there were not some force holding her back, obsessing her,

## THE LAW OF LIFE

robbing her of her very soul of pity? That force could be of but one nature.

On the campus she met Perdita, and stopped her abruptly.

“If you should run across Mrs. Penfold, will you tell her to go at once to the hospital? Elizabeth’s end is nearer than we thought.”

“Oh, poor little girl!” Perdita cried.

The Emperor remembered Perceval’s words—but the dying were safe.

“You’ll tell Mrs. Penfold?”

“Why, I saw her take the lake trolley about an hour ago. I didn’t speak with her. She was too far off, and walking fast.”

The Emperor nodded.

“Can nothing be done for that poor child?” Perdita said eagerly.

“Nothing, I’m afraid. You’ll pardon me for hurrying on?”

The lake trolley! The Emperor did not leap to her conclusions. There would be time enough for that at the boat-landing. She paused, listened. There was no sound of a trolley approaching. Her impatience made waiting impossible. She knew a short cut to the lake down the hills on the other side of the ravine. She would take that.

It had begun to rain, but she seemed unconscious of it as she flew down the steep, rough way she had chosen. The almost precipitous hill suddenly ended at a road which led directly to the lake. Along this road she sped as if on wings.

## THE CRISIS

At the landing she found Henry, the old fisherman from whom Waring had hired his boat, and whom she knew well. Remembering that she must protect Barbara now at every step, she said, with confident assumption:

"Mrs. Penfold went out on the lake, didn't she?"

"Yes, ma'am, her and Professor Waring—more'n half an hour ago."

"That's a great pity," she said, knitting her brows. "I'm afraid I shan't find her now, and the case is urgent, Henry! Her friend and mine, Miss King, is dying."

"Now you don't say so! Not that nice little girl with the blue eyes?"

"Tell me, were they coming back by water?"

"Professor Waring, he said they might walk back, ef it got colder. Twaren't a good day for the lake, but it seems like the 'varsity people go on it most any weather. I've lived here all my life, and before the 'varsity's time no one but a lunatic or a fisherman would 'a gone on it in winter—let alone March."

She interrupted his garrulity.

"Well, I must find her. I can't wait till they come back. I think I can overtake them somewhere by land or water. It's a very urgent case. Get me a boat ready."

"You're not going out in this dirty weather, Miss Dare! There's a heavy swell on—and rainin', too."

"Did you ever know me to stop for weather? Get me a boat at once. I tell you it's a matter of life and death."

He obeyed her, having learned by experience that she meant what she said.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

"Shan't I row you, Miss? I'll not feel easy."

"Don't worry about me. I wasn't born to be drowned."

He rapped with his gnarled knuckles on the wood of the boat's edge.

"'Taint well to boast," he said, in a curt, anxious voice.

"Did they say where they might land if it turned colder?"

"Saunders's or the Point."

The Emperor resolved to steer for the Point, as the lonelier place. She smiled reassuringly at Henry, as he pushed the boat from the landing. The lake challenged her, offering a hostile breast. She turned her head to get the direction of the Point, now almost hidden by mist and rain.

The gray sweep of waters seemed ready to envelop her. The double strain of the past week, anxiety for Elizabeth, anxiety for Barbara, had begun to tell on her nerves, as she suddenly realized now, looking toward Henry's receding figure. She wished that she had brought him—no—he might not be trustworthy in a crisis like this. The thought of possible peril to the woman she loved nerved her for this dangerous row across the lake. Putting up an incoherent prayer, she bent with renewed vigor to her oars.

Meanwhile Barbara and Waring had reached their goal. During the row across the lake they had spoken little, he plying the oars with absorbed energy, she sitting motionless in the stern, her heavy eyes fixed on the distant hills, her fingers tense on the rudder string.



## THE CRISIS

More than once a nervous motion of her hand swerved the boat from its course.

The damp wind loosened her hair, brought a faint color to her cheeks. His face was white as the flecks of foam on the gray water; his brow was knit, his lips compressed; but when he looked at her his eyes softened.

At last the Point loomed up before them, a long, narrow cape fringed with forest-trees growing close to a strip of sandy beach. It ran back to a natural terrace of rock, on which a number of rustic summer cottages stood, gay little dwellings in their proper season, but forlorn enough now with their dark background of dripping, leafless trees. Profound silence reigned on this deserted shore, broken only by the souging of the wind, the dull splash of leaden waves against the rocks. The mist was not heavy enough to shut in near perspectives, but in the distance the towers of Hallworth were obscured.

"You see you have your wish," Waring said, with a faint smile, pointing toward them, as he drew the boat up on the beach.

She nodded.

He gave her his hand. As she stepped out he saw her shiver.

"Dear, are you cold?"

"A little. It doesn't matter."

"It does matter," he said in a low voice. "Most of those cottages have fireplaces or stoves; and very few of them, if I remember, have locks on the windows. I'll build a fire."

"No! no! I must stay out of doors," she cried.

"In this wind and rain, and you're wet through now!"

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"I never take cold. I can talk to you under these trees—I—I—have not much to say."

He turned from her abruptly, his lips set.

"I'll be back in a moment," he said.

She seated herself on a log underneath a tree and buried her face in her hands.

In that attitude he found her when he returned. He touched her gently on the shoulder.

"Come with me, Barbara."

She looked at him with a searching, apprehensive gaze.

"Where?"

"To one of these cottages. I have a fire already in the stove."

"I can't go indoors."

"You're shivering now. I cannot let you kill yourself."

He put an arm about her waist and raised her to her feet; then, still supporting her, led her along the path by which access to the terrace was gained.

The cottage into which he had forced an entrance was a little frame affair, sparsely furnished. Its door now stood hospitably open.

On the porch she drew herself from him.

"Richard, I can't go in."

"Dear, be reasonable. You must get rid of this chill before we start back. Your teeth are chattering. Barbara, for my sake!"

She turned and entered.

The little room boasted a stove in which a fire was crackling, a center-table, a divan, and some cheap chairs. Colored pictures from Christmas numbers of the *Illus-*

## THE CRISIS

*trated London News* and the *Graphic* were pinned against the walls. Before the windows hung curtains of red chintz.

She looked about the place, then at him. He came toward her, and with gentle hands loosened the fur at her throat, and began to unbutton her ulster. She gave herself up to his ministrations. A trance of strange passivity came over her like the ceasing of pain before death.

He took her hat and coat and fur and hung them near the stove, then drew a chair up for her and put her in it. He stood for an instant in hesitation, then knelt beside her, drawing her into his arms. For the ghost of a moment she resisted.

“Barbara!”

“Yes, Richard,” she whispered.

“Give me your word now that you will be my wife.”

“No; I—cannot.”

“You—must.”

“I cannot.”

He was silent. He withdrew his arms, rose to his feet and stood looking down upon her. Meeting his eyes, she rose too. For a fateful instant they hesitated, then overwhelming, overmastering longing swept them toward each other. He strained her to his breast; their lips met in a long kiss.

She sank into the chair again, the terrible paralysis of yielding creeping over her, creeping through her veins like a sweet and deadly drug. He knelt beside her, and again their lips met. Her head rested on his shoulder, her mouth was against his throat.

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Silence reigned. After a little the winter chill of the room crept from its corners.

"Barbara," he said in the lowest voice, as if not to disturb a sleeper. "I am going for more wood. I shall only be a minute."

She nodded.

A door in the back of the room led to the kitchen. As he reached it he turned. She looked at him, and his eyes gazing at her did not seem like the eyes of Richard.

A draught swung the door to with a heavy crash. She sprang to her feet like one suddenly awakened. Horror seized her, horror of herself, terrible fear of him. In another instant he would be back. If she were there when he returned—what?—damnation for both.

She knew that if she saw him again, came again under the spell of his presence, she could not resist this paralysis of the will, and in blind horror of the sin to be, she fled from the room to the porch.

Which direction?

Toward Hallworth—toward Hallworth!

She plunged into the dripping wood, running along like a hunted thing, her loosened hair about her shoulders, her face white, agonized. On and on she ran, sometimes stumbling over roots and fallen logs, once tearing her flesh on a long, thorny branch which clutched at her from some thicket.

She thought she heard his voice calling her name in anguish of appeal.

"Barbara! Barbara!"

And the sound, real or imaginary, terrified her, spurred her on. At last in sheer exhaustion she stum-

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bled, sank down, where a rock protruded between two gnarled trees.

A cleft in it offered a hiding-place until she could get her breath. She crouched against the boulder, trembling. The great boughs of the pine-tree above her rocked against the sky, the wind screaming through them like a creature in blind pain. The clouds, storm-driven, seemed about to descend and mingle with the waves of the lake. To her excited fancy Waring's voice came with every gust of the wind through the winter forest; with every cry of the restless water, now nearer, now further, but always in anguish.

"Barbara! Barbara!" and again "Barbara!" as if a soul and body parted in the uttering of that word.

She was so near the lake that the spray from the waves was sometimes blown into her face. Her limbs soon became stiff and cramped, but she had no desire to rise and go. Another kind of paralysis was stealing over her, like the approach of death.

A hush fell upon her. His voice had died away at last.

Then she became conscious that some one was coming through the woods toward her with a short, quick step that was not Waring's. At first she held her breath in fear; then, as she became more sure that the footsteps were those of a woman, she peered out timidly. Coming toward her was the Emperor, with the air of one bent upon some search. She looked about her at every step, and once she stopped and listened. Her pale face seemed lit with some strange ardor of purpose.

As she drew near, Barbara rose to her feet, tried to go forward to meet her, swayed and put out her arms.



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The Emperor sprang forward, caught her to her breast, supported her with her strong hold. For a moment sky, trees, lake, swam about her in one confused gray mist, then she became conscious of dark eyes drawing her back to physical balance with their deep, quiet gaze.

"Steady, Barbara. You're all right now!"

"Don't leave me! don't leave me!"

"I've no intention of leaving you. I've a boat at the Point. Can you walk back there?"

"Oh, not to the Point!"

She drew back from the Emperor's arms.

"Not to the Point!" she repeated wildly. "I'm afraid."

Again the physical weakness overcame her. She swayed, and again the Emperor took her in her strong grasp, held her to her breast. She looked out over the water, and then down at the tragic face.

"Can you wait here while I bring the boat 'round? There's a bit of beach just below. I could take you in there."

"No, no!" Barbara said. "Don't leave me alone. I must go with you."

"Then it will have to be to the Point."

Barbara looked up at her appealingly, the truth wrenched from her lips.

"I can't meet—him. I—I ran away."

"I know you did," the Emperor said quietly.

"How did you know?"

"I reached the Point just as you came out on the cottage porch. I saw you run into the woods. I made my boat fast and followed you, but I was a minute or two behind. The trail was clear for a while, but once

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or twice I got off the track, or I should have found you sooner."

"Helena!"

"Dear!"

"Why did you come to the Point?"

"For you."

Barbara said nothing, bowed down with misery and shame. The Emperor kept an arm about her waist, and together they made their slow way to the Point. At every step Barbara glanced about her fearfully. The woods seemed haunted with grinning demons.

The Emperor's boat was not at that side of the cape on which Waring had landed. To Barbara it seemed an eternity while the boat was being untied, the oars made ready.

"You're not afraid?"

"Afraid of what?"

"The lake. It looks nasty, but it's a steady wind, no chopping. We'll fly back."

"I don't care—only let us be off," she entreated.

The Emperor drew Barbara's loosened hair into place, then wrapped her own cloak about her.

"You'll need it," Barbara said.

"Not rowing."

"My things—are in the cottage."

Soon they were out on the water. The mist had lifted, and in the distance the University buildings rose against the sky.

"Steer, please," said the Emperor.

"Toward the lighthouse?"

"No; that's too small to keep the direction. Steer toward the towers of Hallworth."

## THE LAW OF LIFE

At the boat-landing Henry came out to meet them.

"I overtook Mrs. Penfold," the Emperor said. "We are both drenched. Could your wife make us a cup of tea—and Henry—wait! 'Phone for a carriage to take us to the hospital."

The old man nodded. If the peculiar circumstances of the case aroused his curiosity he made no sign. His wife gave them hearty welcome to the little frame house near the landing, chirping over them, and bustling about to get them tea. The Emperor, bending over Barbara, chafed her hands. When the tea was brought her she drank it obediently. She seemed dazed.

Henry came in to say that the carriage was there. His wife followed him out again, and for a moment the two women were left alone.

"Come, Barbara!"

"Where?" she whispered.

"To the hospital—to Elizabeth!"

A look almost of terror crossed Barbara's face.

"I cannot go to her! She is pure! She is good!"

"So are you," said the Emperor curtly. "Come!"

In Elizabeth's room no change had taken place, only the hush had deepened. Perceval read the stately prayers of the Church with that ache of impotence in his heart which he always felt in his ministrations to the dying. He now sat near Frederick, who never loosened his hold upon Elizabeth's hand nor took his eyes from her face.

Perceval wondered why Miss Dare did not return. Remembering her anxious eyes, he thought of Barbara. Was Mrs. Penfold in actual peril these days? It might

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be possible. He himself had wandered too much through the mazes of life to be sure of any one save the saints safe with their God.

The door opened and the Emperor entered, leading Barbara. Both women looked haggard. Perceval rose, came forward to meet them, concern in his face for Mrs. Penfold, who seemed ready to faint with fatigue or the stress of some emotion. He brought her a chair, and she sank into it, not even glancing toward the bed.

But the Emperor went softly to the bedside and looked down upon her friend. A white, crushed flower, seemed less helpless, less overthrown, than this girl caught in the toils of death. Revolt and sorrow struggled in the Emperor's breast, a fierce disdain of an order of things in which such tragedies were but incidents.

She came back to Barbara's side.

"She would not know you. She is very far away."

Barbara made no answer. She sat with her head bowed, one hand over her eyes.

The silence deepened. The Emperor rose at last and stepped to the door. There she beckoned to Perceval. He followed her into the hallway.

"I want to ask you," she said, "if you will give Mrs. Penfold something to do when it is all over. She needs now very much something to occupy her mind—or she will be ill—you understand?"

"I understand. I had thought myself of asking her to take care of Clyde, to look after Miss King's people when they arrive."

"A good thing!"

When they went back to the room the signs were

## THE LAW OF LIFE

visible that the change had taken place. Perceval knelt and said a prayer. The nurses and the others knelt with him except Frederick Clyde, who seemed unaware of what was going on around him. When they rose Perceval went directly to Barbara.

"Mrs. Penfold," he said, "I want you to take Frederick home with you and make him eat something. The nurses tell me he has touched nothing since last night. You will do this?"

A shrinking look came into Barbara's face.

"Ought I to?" she said brokenly.

Perceval took no notice.

"Her people will arrive from California in a couple of days. Could I ask you to help us in looking after them a little?"

She nodded, turning her head away.

The nurses left the room, and Perceval with them. The Emperor was leaning over Elizabeth, gazing at her with tearless eyes, murmuring broken baby-words of endearment, strange from her lips.

"And she left her to seek me!" Barbara thought.

She looked at Frederick Clyde's bowed figure. From the depths of her abasement she cried to herself that she could not go to him, speak to him; that she was not worthy.

But the spell of obedience which the Emperor had placed upon her made her yield now to Perceval's command. She rose, and going to the young man's side touched him gently on the shoulder.

"Frederick," she said timidly, "you must come home with me and rest."

He turned his dazed eyes to her.



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"I can't leave her," he said in a low voice.

"You'll not leave her," Barbara said brokenly. "She's yours now—always."

The Emperor frowned. She had come to the breaking point.

"Frederick," she said in a tone of authority, "you must go with Mrs. Penfold."

He shook his head.

"You can come back again. Go now. There's a dear fellow."

He rose.

"I have no wraps," Barbara said in a low voice to the Emperor.

"I've kept the carriage at the door."

Soon after Barbara and Frederick had left, a package was brought to the Emperor, addressed to herself in Waring's writing. Opening it she found Barbara's hat and coat and fur. Despite her sorrow she smiled grimly.

The house when Barbara and her guest entered it seemed silent and deserted. Dr. Penfold's study door was closed. In the kitchen Mehitabel's preparations for a late dinner were in evidence, but she herself was out.

Barbara, doing everything as in a dream, fixed a tray daintily for Frederick and made him eat and drink. They said little to each other, absorbed in separate visions. Hers was of a storm-beaten shore, a wind-swept forest, a room every detail of which she would remember until the day of her death.

When he had finished she told him that he must go and rest. Passive and obedient now, through utter weariness, he followed her to the room up-stairs. She lit

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the fire on the hearth, saw that he had everything for his comfort, then left him—to face herself.

She heard Mehitabel come in, but had not the courage to go down and speak to her. She feared the good woman's shrewd eyes. Where was Waring? Still wandering over the hills? Still calling, calling through the wind and rain? How black the lake must be! What a death-chill in the cottage.

She thought of him impassively, drained by fatigue of all emotion. She turned toward the study. She must go to her husband; must tell him of Elizabeth's death, of Frederick's presence in the house.

She knocked softly on the door. At his response she entered, stood there, ghastly in the lamp-light, and told her tale.

Gathering astonishment was in Dr. Penfold's face, but it was from nothing that she said. He scarcely heard what she said in his wonder at her looks.

When she had finished he rose, came toward her.

"Barbara," he said in an anxious voice, all preoccupation gone from his manner; "Barbara, my child, you look very ill."

Then it was that the flood-gates of her soul opened. With a cry she fell at his feet, weeping hysterically and begging him to send some one to her, that she must have a woman at her side. He listened, dazed, distressed; then lifted her in his arms and bore her to the couch.

"Barbara, don't weep so! You alarm me. This death has unstrung you—what is it you say? Yes—yes, I'll send for any one you want—shall it be Miss Dare?"

"No; she has never been married!" Barbara cried wildly. "Send for Athena—Athena Maturin."

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He thought her half-delirious, and went in all haste to send Mehitabel for Mrs. Maturin. Then he came back and sat by Barbara's side, gazing at her anxiously and patting her hand at intervals.

Her sobs finally ceased. She lay staring at the ceiling with wide, strained eyes.

"You shouldn't have watched her die—you're too young."

"I watched myself die," she said, and he thought her wandering again.

Mehitabel returned with word that Mrs. Maturin was out of town.

"Shall I send for any one else?" her husband asked her.

Barbara shook her head.

"It would be no use," she murmured. "No one can do anything."

Dr. Penfold, distressed and helpless, resigned her to Mehitabel, who put her to bed, crooning over her and saying that the death had unstrung her. Through all her misery Barbara was conscious of relief that she could hide her bruised spirit behind this death.

## CHAPTER LI.

“AMONG THE INNUMERABLE UNWILLING.”

EARLY next morning she awoke with a confused sense of an obligation, a charge laid upon her which she must fulfil. Some dim battle lay back of her dreams, the events of which she could not at first recall, suspended between sleeping and waking in the dawn twilight. But the haunting responsibility slowly quickened her senses. She remembered Clyde.

What else she remembered was not tolerable. She rose and dressed quickly, though it was not yet six.

The house seemed wrapped in profound slumber. She opened a window and looked out upon the campus, lying peaceful, silent under a fresh, fair sky that toward the east was rosy. This dawn she might not have been alive to see.

“I should have drowned myself,” she thought.

The suffocating picture of the cottage blotted out the scene before her. She bowed her face in her hands.

A lost and ruined woman she thought herself. The flight from the cottage could not wipe away the guilt of going there. By her vacillation she had made it easy for him to have his will with her.

But even in the hard light of morning she could not believe he had taken her there deliberately resolved upon their mutual ruin. Her very passivity had borne them both away upon a fearful current. She remembered his eyes as he had last looked upon her. That was not Rich-

## “AMONG THE INNUMERABLE UNWILLING”

ard!—but was this transformed creature her handiwork? In her bitterness she mocked herself. She had mistaken egotism for spiritual exaltation, passion for ideal longings.

Self-torment at last reached its limits. Unable any longer to be alone with her thoughts, she rose and went down-stairs to the kitchen. Mehitabel greeted her with an astonished look.

“Why ain’t you in your bed, Mis’ Penfold,” she said, knitting her brows in gruff solicitude. “The Doctor told me expressly to keep you there. Now what’ll he say?”

“Did he tell you that, Mehitabel?” Barbara said, her eyes wistful.

“He did. He was so worried about you he couldn’t work last night. I heard him walkin’ up and down the study ever so long. T’aint like him—but it’s true,” she added curtly.

Barbara went to the kitchen window, and stood there looking out upon the garden, her face averted from Mehitabel. She had but a confused recollection of what she had said and done the evening before. Had some word escaped her lips, now in her husband’s heart like a grim key opening a dungeon beneath his fair-appearing house?

The thought was intolerable, yet confession might now be her penalty, and separation be imposed, not sought.

The acquiescence of despair filled her with a certain calm. She would think no further than this day and its obligations. She and Richard were parted forever, whether her husband cast her off or not. With avid



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hands she had destroyed a beautiful creation; had lost all power of entering upon a nobler relation with her friend.

In her bewildered state the faulty logic lying back of this finality escaped her. Like all idealists the love of the impossible, running in her veins a bitter-sweet intoxicant, constantly disturbed her judgment. She believed that she could have kept her friendship with Richard at the fair height where it began if she had been a great saint. The discovery of her sinnerhood was absolute, crushing, ideal in its very thoroughness.

She would pay the price, but she would think no further than this day.

She told Mehitabel the story of Elizabeth and Clyde in a way to awaken the good woman's sympathy, and what was more difficult—gain her willingness to be of service to him should he remain for a few days under Dr. Penfold's roof.

Her desire to keep him was in its essence that she should have some duty upon which to fix her thoughts. Her hysterical outbreak of the evening before had frightened her; warned her that self-control must be held. She clutched at straws to hold it.

While Mehitabel was preparing Clyde's breakfast she went to her husband's room, nerving herself to face his contempt of her, his reproaches, his silence or his quiet condemnation. She believed that he knew now—or suspected.

But she found him still sleeping, his hair disordered as if by much tossing, his look unquiet. She sat down by the side of his bed and watched him as once he had watched her; dreading lest he should awaken, yet long-

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ing for him to open his eyes, to see her there, to end her suspense.

She had resolved upon her course of action. If he knew or suspected she should tell him the whole story from the hour of his giving her into Waring's keeping to the dread menace of surrender in the cottage. She should tell him and abide his judgment. If he did not suspect she would keep her story to herself—at least until the choking mist about her cleared.

The purity of superlative scholarship seemed his as he lay there. Looking at the massive brow she wondered if it were after all a negative purity, the state of one in whom all the vital forces had gone to feed the insatiable intellect. But she put the thought from her with self-reproach. Who was she that she should judge the pure in heart? She, abandoned to her passion in everything but act.

Mehitabel knocked at the door; handed her a sealed envelope.

“Mr. Waring left this,” she whispered. “He inquired particular how you were. Mr. Clyde is up—wants to speak to you when convenient—I’ve taken his breakfast to him.”

Barbara broke the seal.

But one line was written across the paper:

“Send me some word of yourself, for God’s sake!”

She put it again in the envelope, thrust the envelope into the waist of her dress. Yes, she would write to him—the last letter.

Her husband stirred, turned for a moment on his side, then opened his eyes, wide, blue, strangely like a child’s as they gazed at her in bewilderment.

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"Why—Barbara! Didn't you go to bed?"

"It is morning!" she said softly.

He looked at her, knitting his brows.

"But you went to bed ill—dear!"

She nodded, unable to speak. She took his hand in hers, holding it tightly.

"You're better?"

"Yes, I hope so," she said faintly. "I've been a trouble to you, Amos."

He was wide awake now. He remembered everything; her casting herself at his feet, her passionate weeping, her snatches of wild speech. He remembered that he had not been able to work afterward; that he had paced his study until a late hour, unable to throw off strange fears, haunting accusations; that he had quieted himself at last by a resolve to beg her in the morning to tell him what was troubling her. A tenderness deeper, more solicitous than he had ever known had been awakened toward her by the sight of her suffering, and blended with it remorse for a preoccupation which might have blinded him to some need of hers.

"Barbara," he said, "you were very unhappy last night. Can you tell me why, dear?"

She had never heard him speak with such directness of appeal; with such warmth of kindness. Did he know? Was this mercy? charity?

"Yes; I was unhappy," she said faintly.

"And—and you are still?"

"Yes," fainter yet.

"Is it—is it anything you can tell me?"

His eyes, innocent, solicitous, gazed into hers. She turned her head away.

## “AMONG THE INNUMERABLE UNWILLING”

“No,” she said in a low voice; “you—you wouldn’t understand!”

He shrank a little, as if she had struck him. Did she think him quite out of life and common human experiences? Well! It would be small wonder if she did.

“I might try,” he said, with a deprecating smile.

It was becoming evident to her that whatever his concern about her, it was fixed on no definite revelation. Her purpose of silence was reinforced.

“Can any one—ever live another’s life—settle another’s problems?” she said, with a sudden desire to take away the hurt of her words.

He was silent, knowing that their union was not close enough for him to urge the identity of life between wife and husband.

“I suppose not—but, Barbara, you could trust me, I think—with—anything.”

“Not with—sin?” she said brokenly.

“With sin,” he repeated in vague wonder. “My little girl, what do you know of sin?”

In the face of his misconception of her she was silent. She sat holding his hands tightly, not looking at him. She felt his gaze upon her.

“Barbara,” he said, “whatever is troubling you, don’t put me out of your life now. I’ve been out of it, I know, dear. I could not break the habits of years, and I’ve left you very much to yourself—but don’t put me away now.”

His gentle appeal was unnerving her by its very vagueness.

“I want to come into your life,” she said, in a voice that trembled; “but I don’t know the way.”

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He was silent.

"Is there anything—anything that you can give me to do—any papers to copy, any letters to write?"

"Yes, I do need your help," he said, lying deliberately in his desire to take that aged look from her eyes.

"Very well—I'll begin to-day—or—as soon as this is over with Elizabeth. Frederick is in the house, you know. Would it interfere with you in any way if I kept him for a few days?"

"Not at all, my dear. I like the boy. Is he very much broken up?"

"I think he is. He—he loved her."

From her husband she went to Frederick, who was pacing up and down the little drawing-room awaiting her coming.

"Mrs. Penfold, you've been too good to me. I wanted to see you to tell you I was grateful before going to——"

He broke off abruptly, holding his head high above waters that might drown him.

"You must come back," she said, in a tone that held a command. "Dr. Penfold and I both want you to stay here as long as you can—we thought it might be—easier for you."

"It would be easier," he said, with frank directness. "The fraternity men would be awfully good to me—but I don't want to be a damper there—or here," he added, with a faint smile.

"We are—quiet here," Barbara said, "and—not young."

He looked at her wonderingly.



## “AMONG THE INNUMERABLE UNWILLING”

“You are coming—soon—to the hospital,” he said, in a low voice.

“Yes—I will come,” she answered.

“You saw her—before the delirium came on?”

“No.”

“But—but she wanted to see you.”

“Yes.”

He looked at her for further explanation. She gave none.

The day, with its strange duties, wore along. She spent most of it at the hospital with the Emperor, giving what aid she could in the arrangement of necessary details. She had still the strange impression of being in a dream, from which some voice would suddenly awaken her. Elizabeth, beautiful in death; Allaire, Dutton, all the people who came with their sympathy, their proffers of help, seemed part of this dream. The dead girl's fellow students, the members of her fraternity, her friends at Stafford Hall, brought offerings of flowers; spoke of her in whispers in the corridors, their heads bowed beneath their memories.

Late in the day the President himself came. Elizabeth had been a brilliant student. He had known her and her work personally.

He stood at her bedside, looking down upon her with a curious grief which was perhaps the only outlet possible for his hidden, protecting pride in the University under his charge. A man singularly devoid of sentiment, the death of a student always touched a secret chord in his nature; profound regret for a young life removed from the very center of vital activities. Alma

## THE LAW OF LIFE

Mater cherished her children at a beautiful crisis of their lives—the period of unfolding. How young these children were, for all their bravery of scholarship, their intellectual confidence, their proud degrees, the President knew well. He begrudged them to death with a more than paternal jealousy. Whether they passed to final extinction or to worlds where the pomp of learning faded in sempiternal light, their going forth bereft a greater family than the one they knew through ties of blood.

At the end of the day Barbara went home, Clyde accompanying her. Elizabeth's people were to arrive on the morrow, and she had promised the Emperor to help in looking after them. The dream did not break. That she should be doing all these things seemed to her confused sense little less than the acts of one raised from the dead; but her soul was in the deep grave by the lakeside.

When the night quiet had descended upon the house she went to her room to write to Waring. She had anticipated tearing up many sheets in the effort, but the direct words came easily.

“The greatest proof you can give me now of your friendship is to leave Hallworth at the end of this term. I have not changed toward you, but I cannot follow the path you wish.”

She signed her full name, sealed and addressed the letter, committing herself finally to the arid journey of duty. Perceval was right. She would be absolutely miserable. But would she gain a certain peace? She doubted it. The crucifix, lying among the papers of her desk, was but a memorial that once in the world's his-

## “AMONG THE INNUMERABLE UNWILLING”

tory a man had gone willingly to death. She was herself among the innumerable unwilling, sullenly numb to the bliss of dying.

## CHAPTER LII.

### “A HERO’S ROLE!”

WHEN Waring found that Barbara had left the cottage he first ran frantically to the place where the boat was moored, fearing that in some paroxysm of fright or revolt she had fled to the lake. During those few moments of suspense he had lived an eternity of remorse and apprehension. Was murder as well as dishonor to be at his door?

To his infinite relief the boat was still there. Making it fast with a knot which he knew she could not untie, he hurried back to the cottage, hoping that she had returned under stress of her helplessness on that deserted shore. But she was not in the cottage. Where had she flown? What direction had she taken?

He plunged into the woods, calling her name in a hoarse, anguished voice, and making a wide circle about the group of cottages. His only answer was the moaning of the wind, the splash of the waves against the rocky terrace. He knew why she had fled—because all his honor, all his chivalry had been swept away in one moment by desire. That she fled from herself as well as from him, his acute self-reproach did not permit him to see.

He had lost her forever! Would a woman of Barbara’s stamp entrust herself for life to a man with whom she could not safely trust herself one hour? Her appeals to him not to ask her to go into the house rang in his ears,

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maddened him now into a frenzy of search. He imagined her wandering through those dripping woods, running, perhaps, in very fear of him. That Barbara should fear him was to him exquisite punishment.

He came back at last to the cottage. Standing on the porch irresolute as to his next course of action, he saw out on the lake a boat with two figures in it—both women. It was too far away for him to recognize them, but the sight filled him with questioning wonder. Who could they be? Why were they on the lake in such weather? Whoever held the oars was skilful. The boat flew along headed for the lighthouse. Suddenly a new suspicion sent him again to the Point. But his boat was still tossing at its mooring. Baffled, miserable, he plunged again into the woods, calling her name in sharp entreaty, looking to the right, to the left, behind every tree, every rock that might afford her shelter.

Twilight was coming on when he re-entered the cottage with the last faint hope of finding her there. But his voice, his footsteps, awoke only echoes. Taking down her wraps, he made them into a bundle, and covered them with his overcoat.

The fire in the stove had long gone out. The room was desolate, tawdry and deathly chill. Disgust filled him of the scene with which he had become shamefully identified. He had been a brute—and, what was worse, a clumsy one. He gave a vicious kick to a piece of wood lying in his way to the door. The door he made fast as he had found it, then, taking his bundle, climbed out the window, painfully conscious that the drama had arrived at a dreary and ridiculous stage, and that, on an adjacent Olympus, the gods were laughing.



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He rowed back to the landing. Henry greeted him laconically.

"Thought you was drowned."

"It was a good day for it. Did—the boat with the two ladies arrive safely?"

"Sure. Miss Dare's a great hand with the oars—and Mis' Penfold she don't know what 'tis to be afraid."

Waring nodded. Covert reproach seemed in Henry's words.

The mystery of the other boat was at once solved and deepened. Where and how had the Emperor found Barbara?

"Miss Dare seemed terribly anxious," Henry went on. "They drove straight to the hospital."

Anxious about whom? Barbara was surely not ill enough for that! But he did not dare to ask questions lest he should betray himself. At least he knew where he could send the wraps without compromising their owner.

He walked up to the ex-President's house under cover of night, taking the unfrequented ways. That a woman had come to the rescue, had carried off Barbara, was the last humiliation. Self-mockery threw a banal light over the event, and chiefly on him, his chivalry in tatters. He reflected bitterly that a man deliberately bent upon the ruin of a woman was more honorable than he. Mordant disgust killed for a time even passion. The consciousness of being a fool is more terrible than the consciousness of being a sinner.

With his sinfulness Waring did not at this stage concern himself. That he should love Barbara, should want her divorced, was no evil; but that he should have failed

## “A HERO’S ROLE!”

in chivalry toward her was an irreparable disgrace. She had trusted him and he had betrayed her trust. He had been clumsy, had played the fool’s part—only to lose her!

Had he lost her irretrievably? He reflected that if he had been wiser, had walked with her where it was not lonely, where she had nothing to fear from him, had talked with her in a quiet, reasonable way, he might now have her promise of a divorce. Once that promise given, he knew she would keep it.

Well, he might yet have it. The most strait-laced could scarcely oppose the dissolution of such a union, barren on both the spiritual and physical planes. The most strait-laced, yes! But he might have to meet now not only her opposition on the ground of its being wrong, but—thought unbearable—her contempt of him, her shattered ideal.

He spent a sleepless night. Early next morning he wrote one line to her.

Haggard with self-accusation he went to his classes. He had as a rule a keen delight in teaching; but to-day the upturned faces of these boys and girls seemed as expressionless as so many pans of milk. Would they all grow up to be fools?

At the end of the last hour the Boy of Barbara’s acquaintance came up to speak to him. The youngster’s hero-worship had caused Waring some amusement during the winter—kindly amusement over a state of mind which he perfectly understood, having experienced it himself. This morning, however, the Boy’s deferential manner filled him with a vague irritation.

“I beg pardon, Mr. Waring.”

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“Yes?”

The rising inflection was not encouraging. The Boy hesitated, then plunged ahead—stammering.

“Are you—are you going to favor us—this afternoon?”

“Favor you—what do you mean?”

“Haven’t you seen the announcements, sir?”

“What announcements? I have been out of town, you know.”

“Of the mass-meeting this afternoon to petition the President to depose Rebbor.”

Waring’s astonishment was in his face, but in a moment he recollected himself.

“They are really going to hold one this afternoon? I did not know things had gone so far.”

The Boy looked puzzled.

“I am the chairman of the committee, sir. We sent you notice three days ago; also an invitation to address the meeting.”

“It is probably in my mail,” Waring said coolly. “I only returned late yesterday. I have not had an opportunity to open my letters.”

“But you will address us,” the Boy said eagerly, adding with some importance, “I think we’re in a fair way to gain our end.”

He was searching his hero’s face for the light of sympathy, but Waring looked non-committal, even indifferent. The Boy was puzzled, hurt. He had expected the students’ mass-meeting to be great news to this man, who had been fearless enough to run amuck of John Rebbor and his millions. His manner now would not indicate withdrawal from this enterprise—no, he was

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tired, abstracted. Perhaps he was in possession of official knowledge which revealed grave dangers in the path of enthusiasm. Gallantly the Boy fought for his hero. Waring’s face during the lecture-hour had seemed strangely worried—sad with the sadness of some defeat.

“I hope you can find it convenient to come,” he said hastily. “You are our leader in this battle for the honor of Hallworth. We all look to you.”

Waring rose with a gesture almost of impatience.

“My dear fellow, I’m afraid it’s a hopeless one; but I think I can arrange to come. What time is your meeting?”

“At three.”

“I shall be at the library at one, working in the Greek seminary, I can let you know then.”

“Thank you, sir,” the Boy said with enthusiasm.

Waring smiled, giving him a nod of dismissal.

He sat for a long time in the empty room, revolving unpleasant thoughts; face to face with the fact that not a small element in his bravado against Rebbor was the knowledge that to win Barbara for his wife meant the inevitable leaving of Hallworth, the final abandonment of a University which with all his criticism of her he passionately loved. But he had loved Barbara more. The recklessness of his emotion, coloring all his acts that winter, had made a single-handed battle against Hallworth and Rebbor, for the glory and honor of Alma Mater, seem not only feasible but highly desirable, a deed to cover him with chivalrous glory.

Up against this new aspect of a hero’s role, as interpreted by the Boy, he asked himself whether this gift to the University was after all an unmitigated evil?

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Had he judged these economic questions from the sophomoric, absolute standpoint? Could such standards hold in a world where all was relative?

But these questions were but sophistries—he knew too well—of his overwhelming fear that he should imperil his position at Hallworth and be driven into final exile from Barbara. To lose her and the University both would be intolerable.

What should he do? If he addressed this meeting, placed himself as a leader of callow youth against the final judgment of Alma Mater, the result was inevitable. That the President had refrained from taking official notice of the article in *College and State* was owing, Waring knew, to no clemency toward himself, but from a desire to hush up the matter, to keep it as far as possible out of the newspapers. But the article had been a firebrand to inflammable and unthinking youth. He, its author, was now threatened by the conflagration, from which Rebbor promised to emerge like the phoenix, while he perished. The President would inevitably request his resignation.

On the other hand was the character of a—martyr! The students' hero-worship, looking out from the frank eyes of the Boy, would follow him for an hour into his exile. But his all night's disgust of himself had not been in vain. He threw off in bitter impatience the idea of a hero's role.

He saw his course, but he hedged.

The events of the past twenty-four hours, capped by this new difficulty, were showing him how hopelessly entangled with his love for Barbara all his motives and actions had been. Earlier in the winter his protest



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against the corruption of Hallworth with Rebbor’s millions had seemed to him the direct outcome of certain principles which he had always cherished—or believed he cherished. Now he could not escape the knowledge that this protest was founded less on his convictions than on the strength of a prophetic vision—himself departing from Hallworth, a martyr to principle—with Barbara in his arms!

Now that he was not sure that she should be his ultimately, he shrank in overmastering dread from any step which might further imperil his position at the University. The keen blade of the President’s will made clean cuts, once he had decided upon a course of action. That double exile he could not face.

From his freshman year his devotion to Hallworth had been extraordinary, even considering the fact that Hallworth herself was a university to inspire a high devotion in the breast of her children. Institutions, like persons, have souls, possessed to a greater or less degree of magnetism. Whether from her ideals, her methods, her setting of great natural beauty, her democratic character, or from all these elements in combination, Hallworth had always won the hearts of her fledglings while training their intellects. The sweetness of being hers stole into the veins of even the rawest or most callous of freshmen by the time he had reached his senior year. He might criticise her, break all her rules within his small power, laugh at the grinds who choked themselves with her intellectual abundance; but he went from her at last with tears in his heart if not in his eyes. Through the press and struggle of the after-years, sordid or inspiring; in the turmoil of the cities, on the prairies of the

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West, in every part of the New World or the Old, he looked back to her with what was perhaps the purest emotion of his life. Lake and valley, hills beyond hills, the beautiful country she dominated with her towers, seen from the dusty stretches of after-life was to many of her children the only country they should ever know from which the light of enchantment could not fade.

All this Hallworth had been to Waring—and more. To him she was no unsocial entity. Sentiment aside, he saw her play a great part in the life of the country. His passionate desire to bring her closer to the vital political interests of the land, resulting in his foundation of the League and of the magazine, had been born in his undergraduate period. To get back to her, to become a part of her Faculty, was the ambition which had lightened his struggles in New York. His bravery as a reporter of the Spanish-American War was a leaf for her laurels. His great desire was to see her a nursing mother not only of future citizens but of statesmen.

The woman intervening, these ideals had been thrust into the background. Barbara obscuring Hallworth, the University became for the time one institution more or less in a country overrun with them.

Now he knew that his dread of leaving the place was dread of leaving her.

Yet he was in honor bound to carry to its logical issues an enterprise which he had fathered, and which the younger sons of Hallworth had taken up with embarrassing enthusiasm. In honor bound! The memory of that scene in the cottage clinched the course which faced him. He would not follow up his disloyalty to her

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by being a turncoat. The Boy’s good, gray eyes, full of such perfect confidence in his leadership, haunted him. He would make the speech and pay the price.

Already damned by his decision into an outcast from the University, he went his way sullenly to the library. On the avenue he met Dutton. Between the two men a coolness had existed of late which Waring knew was due to Dutton’s belief that he was deliberately wooing the wife of a friend. Dutton was one of those exasperating persons, becoming, it is true, rarer and rarer in modern society, whose simple code of morals knows but right and wrong. This pitiful blindness to beautiful shades of gray turned him sometimes into a kind of *bon enfant*, with whom the complex was not safe. Waring, wishing him at the other end of creation, stopped perforce, because Dutton had paused on the walk, a question in his face.

“I’ve been looking for you, old fellow,” Dutton said, with a note of friendliness in his voice that had not been there for some time. “I wanted to ask you if you’re back of this mass-meeting they’re going to hold to-day.”

“No; not back of it except in the sense that I was responsible in the beginning for agitating the matter. They expect me to make a speech.”

“And you will?”

“I suppose I will.”

“Richard,” Dutton said impulsively, “don’t do it. There’s no use fighting Hunt and Rebbor in combination, and you’ll only get the worst of it.”

“What do you mean by ‘getting the worst of it’?”

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Dutton looked embarrassed.

"Well, out with it."

"They might ask you to leave Hallworth—that's all."

"I wouldn't be much loss to the place," Waring said, with an accent of bitterness.

"Oh, tommy-rot! You belong here. What's the use of rousing Hunt's ire and getting yourself ousted for a lost cause?"

"I've got to stand by the students, since they've stood by me."

"That's all very well—very honorable——" Waring winced—"but, Dicky, there's such a thing as—recklessness. Rebbor's come to stay, so you'd better stay, too, to help keep him in bounds."

Waring smiled.

"So you're not his out-and-out enemy?"

"I never did take your view of the matter. I think his business genius will be of great service to the University. At any rate he's here, and the students will never force Hunt's hands. He's too clever a man and—and he's not an idealist."

Waring gave a grim laugh.

"No; his worst enemy couldn't call him that."

Waring wondered if Dutton, to hasten his marriage with Allaire, was trying to make himself solid with the President, but he put the thought by with sudden contrition. Dutton was an honest fellow, but never given to extremes—except in love. His temperate view of Rebbor was entirely consistent with his character. No; this concern was only another proof of his patient friendliness.



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“Paul, you’re several kinds of a brick; but don’t bother about me. Honestly, I’m not worth it.”

A wistful look came into Dutton’s eyes, but he made no answer.

They walked along in a silence which Dutton broke at last.

“Isn’t it too bad they couldn’t save Miss King. Such a nice girl!”

“What do you mean? I didn’t know she was ill.”

“Haven’t you heard of her death? She died yesterday at the hospital of pneumonia—late yesterday afternoon.”

“Well, she’s saved a lot!” Waring said brutally.

“I am afraid the reflection wouldn’t comfort the man she was engaged to,” Dutton said, betrayed into unaccustomed satire by a fellow-feeling for Clyde, that had cast a shadow even over a dear evening with Allaire.

Waring made no reply.

In the library he met Perdita. She beckoned to him from an alcove, and asked him to accompany her to the stacks. She wished to consult him about a certain book.

He found the book for her, but her interest in it seemed languid. As she handed it back to him she said with airy challenge:

“Is the League responsible for this mass-meeting, calling us all to a holocaust of the rich and fat this afternoon?”

Waring laughed.

“This mass-meeting is worse than a germ in the air. Paul Dutton has just been talking about it.”

“Oh, I’m immune. Being a woman, my business



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with John Rebbor will be wholly in the area of functions—a demi-tasse, a rose—a fan—candles——”

“Yet you didn’t approve of him.”

“No; I don’t yet. But *l’amour de l’impossible* is not one of my virtues. Will you be at this meeting?”

“Yes.”

“Speech?”

“Yes.”

“Don’t.”

“Why not?”

“You ask a woman ‘why’? That isn’t fair.”

“You say ‘don’t.’ I ask you ‘why’?”

“Hallworth can’t spare you,” she said, her light manner suddenly dropping from her.

“You mean there’ll be good reason for the University to deprive itself of such a valuable acquisition as myself, should I address the young things?”

“I don’t accept your satire. It seems to me a useless challenge—at this late day. Pardon me for speaking plainly.”

“Oh, you’re right! I perfectly agree with you.”

“Then why do you do it?”

“Logic of events.”

She smiled.

“There are times when it is imperative to be illogical.”

It was two o’clock. He had given his promise of a speech to the Boy, who had departed in a haze of gratitude. Time hanging heavily on his hands, he went to the office to see if he might find there by any chance some message from Barbara. He found instead a note

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from the Emperor, saying she would not find time for her editorial work until after Elizabeth's funeral. She made no reference to the meeting.

## CHAPTER LIII.

“ AVE ROMA IMMORTALIS ! ”

At three o'clock the opera-house was full to the doors, though no single motive brought the assemblage together. The contingent of students who had an intelligent comprehension of the grounds of Waring's attack upon Rebbor was really very small. Of the others, some were there to exercise their youthful privilege of opposition—without regard to the thing opposed; some because Quixotism is the most rapid in its spread of all contagions; while not a small number were present for the pure joy of matching their wills against Prexy's—known to be adamant, and tempting therefore.

The women students were conspicuous by their absence. The League had already noted with a certain masculine satisfaction that the ladies, quite tractable and docile while following vague, vast issues, shied at the definite, and retreated to the cover of Stafford Hall. Certain officers of the organization had already deducted from this phenomenon conclusive proof that women did not have the suffrage, not because they couldn't get it, but because at heart they didn't want it. It would pin them down to particular statements, definite theories, definite courses of actions, whereas they liked best to roam.

On the stage the officers of the League were seated with certain undergraduates who, by reason of their enthusiasm, or of what they professed to know on this profound subject, were considered eligible speakers.

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As three o'clock struck Waring entered from the wings and seated himself at the back of the stage. His appearance was greeted with applause, and with the time-honored question of what was the matter with him. The assemblage being unanimous in its opinion that he was all right, the meeting was called to order.

The very young spoke first, on the principle that the arguments would gain in weight and lucidity with increasing years and experience. What the very young said made up in fervor what it lacked in originality. They had evidently been wrestling with tough volumes in that stack of the library devoted to social economics. If the information derived therefrom bore about it a certain Corot atmosphere, it gained in picturesqueness what it lost in reliability. Waring's sense of humor was severely tried during the speechmaking despite the heaviness that weighed upon him. He was experiencing the sensations of a candidate who must listen with smiling approval to the misconceptions of his policy as set forth by his constituents. Surely they who rouse youth must be skilful firemen.

The post-graduates followed with less enthusiasm but with more righteous rigidity. They spoke of the changes which had come over the country within the past ten years; of the enormous commercial developments; of the sinister dangers hidden in the concentration of wealth; finally, turning from the general to the particular, of Rebbor and his ill-gotten gains, arguing that his trusteeship would inevitably lower the ideals of Hallworth, distinguished from her birth by her democratic spirit, her devotion to the purest American principles.

Much applause interrupted these speeches. The dis-

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organized enthusiasm of the opening of the meeting was now crystallized into serious attention, even on the part of those who had come with no deeper purpose than to see or hear some new thing.

At last the chairman, the Boy, quite pale with earnestness, introduced Waring in language youthfully superlative. A hush came over the meeting. It was expected that the speech of the leader of the movement would sum up, interpret and complement the others.

Waring, as he stood waiting for the clapping to subside, looked not a bad subject for undergraduate hero-worship. His athletic figure had taken on an academic spareness. His strong, clearly modeled face, somewhat worn by the experience through which he had been passing, had just enough of reserve and of repressed emotion in it to suggest the mystery of superior knowledge. A professorial air he had never had, being too careless of learning for its own sake.

Without preliminary bows to his subject, he began by saying that further comment on Rebbor and his gift to the University was unnecessary. The trusteeship was a fact, and, despite his own and their desire to remove this new officer, candor compelled him to admit that defeat was almost a foregone conclusion. What then?

At this juncture a deeper hush of expectancy fell upon the house, clearly disappointed by this admission of probable defeat at the very beginning of a speech of victory, winged by the youthful devotion so richly manifested.

What then? What remains always at the end of every defeat? Suppose you were fighting a battle for some principle of honor in your country's behalf. You



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lose. Your nation adopts the very measure from which you fought to save her. Would you on that account refute the obligations of your citizenship, refuse to serve her when service was most needed? Your country may act contrary to every principle which you believe right, but you are nevertheless hers; your duty is to live for her, to die for her.

The relation in which you stand to your University is the same in which you stand to your country. Whatever she does, the obligation of service is not removed.

He went on to speak of the various modes of service, some local and particular, some wide and general, leading, indeed, from the lecture-room, the library, the laboratory, to undiscovered lands and places hid by God. As he spoke the poetry of his devotion to Hallworth came breaking through the difficult subject in all the gleams of romance. He told the story of the University, as if the institution were indeed a heroine, differing from others by the promise of immortal life. Ivy and laurel were to be hers in the future, but not upon her walls. They should enwreath her sons and daughters, by whom, chiefly, she was honored in the world.

This was not what the audience had expected, but the magnetism of Waring's personality bore them through disappointment into a newer, stranger enthusiasm, the eternal "Ave Roma immortalis, morituri te salutant."

The meeting ended in a burst of applause; even the perpetual emotion of the undergraduate, the desire to tilt with Prexy, being for the moment forgotten.

Afterward Waring went for a long, lonely walk

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into the country. Depressed though he was, he felt a certain satisfaction in the event of the afternoon as having been at least honest. He could dismiss it from his mind, where already the thought of Barbara was imperious.

Just twenty-four hours since the scene in the cottage! What had been her thoughts of him since then? Lose her he could not—that was all he knew!

The country through which he tramped was haunted by her. On the edge of a pine-wood he paused. Against its green gloom her face seemed to form, white, clear, pure; framed in its soft dark hair; the deep gray eyes, gray as the sea under a dark sky, gazing into his, mournful as a woman's, trustful as a child's. Would she ever trust him again?

Her fleeing from him had made her infinitely more precious, more to be desired. His heart hungered for her; all the more because exile might be thrust upon him. What woman could ever take her place? Their beauty, their wit, their love, might divert him, might carry him away for a time, but her soul! her soul! What could take the place of its perfect sweetness!

He walked on and on, her face before him, her voice in his ears—a voice whose richness and depth of tone had always delighted him. When she said "Richard" heaven opened.

Spring would purple the hills soon and wrap the willows in yellow fog. Already the intolerable thrill of it was in the air. Even as a child he had hated the season, with its freight of restlessness, of unsatisfied life. In the city it came with flying dust, with heat in sunny corners, and that faint odor of asphalt, suggestive of infinite

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summer weariness. In the country, with consumptive, fragile flowers, damp breezes, swollen brooks and sudden hot sunshine; but whether in city or country, the vague oppression of it had never been wholly absent from his spirit. Now it deadened him, knowing how long his arms were to be empty. He saw a procession of springs leading to many scenes, to many people, but never to her; the path of success, perhaps, the ways of a thousand interests, but never the homeward way.

He remembered little things about her, as one remembers the traits of the dead; her manner of turning her head on one side when she was listening; the slight lift of the short upper lip when she smiled; her quick, nervous movements; her habit of propping her cheek on her hand; all the sweet ways of her.

The stars were shining when he returned to the campus; but darker night was in his heart.

Next morning the mail brought him her letter; also a note from the President asking him to call that afternoon.

## CHAPTER LIV.

### THE FACE OF EXILE.

WHEN Waring called that afternoon at the President's he was ushered into the drawing-room, stately and comfortless, reflecting in the arrangement of its furniture the austerities of an unmarried middle-aged scholar. The very silence of the house seemed official.

On the polished floor of the hall came the pit-pat of a dog's feet. Melampus entered, sniffed, but, respecting academic calves, retired to the vantage point of the hearth. In any other mood Waring would have made friends with the dog, exercising a certain talent of attraction he possessed for animals; but to-day even trivialities seemed not worth while.

He found himself suddenly nervous and longing for the interview to be over. What its nature would be he had not the slightest doubt. Under the reserve and courtesy of the President's brief note he read the final resolve. He should be asked to leave Hallworth.

He had set his teeth, ignoring the pain that wrenched his heart. Until he had known Barbara he had made a bride of the University. Now Alma Mater questioned his devotion. In truth "Love had robbed him of immortal things."

A servant entered, requesting him to go to the library, where Dr. Hunt awaited him.

He found the President seated at his desk, turning over some papers. The day being unusually dark and

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stormy, the candles were lighted in the tall bronze candelabra upon the desk. From this halo of mild radiance Dr. Hunt's face looked out, urbane as that of his idol Horace. As Waring entered he rose and shook hands with him cordially.

"Pardon me for keeping you waiting," he said, in his clear, crisp voice. "I had an important letter to finish. No; take this chair. I can vouch for its springs. A nasty day, is it not? Let me give you a little port."

"Indeed, no. Nothing for me."

"I insist. I know the history of this—legitimate throughout."

He touched a bell and gave orders to a servant. When the decanter was brought he poured out a glass for Waring, then one for himself, holding it up to the light, as if for the moment he forgot everything but its delicious color and aroma.

Waring sipped his unwillingly. He wished no physical sensations to come between him and what he had to meet.

The President seemed in no hurry to open the subject. He took his wine with all the deliberateness of the epicure, leaning back in his chair, relaxed and grateful; talking on various subjects with the charm of which he was capable. He rose at last to show his guest a Theocritus whose binding he had himself designed. Waring turned the leaves absently, bending a young, disturbed face over its rich beauty.

His pallor, his look of defeat, were appealing to the President as the cleverest defense of his position could not have done. Of all the younger men in the Univer-



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sity, this one who had persistently opposed him was his favorite. But he had been too long dominated by an impersonal and official rule of life to be turned aside from his purpose by his liking for Waring. This hot-headed theorist must go. The New York morning papers had given half columns to this mass-meeting as perhaps critical in determining the future policy of Hallworth. Rebbor's gift and the terms of it having been fully exploited, the news of the meeting took on more than a local interest. One paper said that despite the youth of the instigators and their obscure position it had almost a national significance; because it dealt with what had become essentially a national issue.

The President had read these accounts with impatience. That he had not forbidden the meeting was the logical issue of his policy of ignoring agitations among the students, and of his belief that Waring would scarcely go so far as to address it. But he had taken this last, fatal step. His speech, much garbled, was in the papers.

What the President could do to repair the mischief he had done; sending a wire that morning to Rebbor that the University disclaimed all responsibility in the matter, and that Waring's resignation would be asked for. Within a couple of hours a reassuring telegram had arrived, begging Dr. Hunt not to concern himself over a piece of youthful misconception and folly—the dismissal of Waring was all the comment necessary to the world from Hallworth.

Waring laid down the Theocritus and turned to his host with an expectant look, which drew the President's thoughts at last to his lips.

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"I had not the pleasure," he began, "of attending your mass-meeting yesterday."

Waring smiled faintly, said nothing.

"But my deprivation has been in part made up to me by these somewhat elaborate reports of it in the New York morning papers. Mr. Waring, I congratulate you," he added dryly. "You certainly have the courage of your convictions."

Still Waring was silent.

"I will not enter into argument with you concerning these principles which you believe to be at stake," the President went on in his even, measured voice; "to youth its theories, to age its facts. I think you have conscientiously tried to serve the University according to your lights, but—but these may have their limitations—may be untrustworthy—may—may hover, indeed, above quagmires."

Waring nodded, his fingers playing nervously with the stem of his wine-glass.

"To hitch your wagon to a star is not always a wise course, despite our Emerson. We are concerned chiefly with the affairs of this planet—not to be learned in an hour. Forgive me for being personal when I say that you have an extraordinary number of the virtues of youth, but, as always, you pay the penalty for your rich endowment—I should recommend you to experience——"

He paused. Waring raised his eyes a moment.

"I thank you," he said simply. "I quite appreciate your point of view."

The President smiled.

"I hope it will not cost me your friendship—which,

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believe me, I esteem—when I say to you, frankly, that I think New York would be a wider and better field for your activities than any university. Newspaper work, in which you have already scored such brilliant successes, offers enormous opportunities in the editorial field for the promulgation of political and social enterprises. Moreover the cosmopolitan life is a corrective to idealism——” He paused, smiling. “Not that I undervalue idealism when kept in bounds, but the academic life is apt to foster it to the exclusion of sterner qualities. These, also, I believe you possess, and should bring to abundant fruition in the city world. I have written to the editor of the *Morning Post*—a lifelong friend—recommending you to the highest position he can give you on his staff. Should you prefer to continue the academic life, you may count on my influence to secure you a position in some university worthy of your services.”

“Which Hallworth dispenses with,” Waring said, with quiet abruptness.

“Do not put it harshly. If we ask your resignation, we yet know that our loss is great.”

“Thank you, sir. Shall I present my resignation before the next Faculty meeting?”

“If you will be so kind.”

Silence fell between them. The rain beat against the window-panes, the wind cried in the chimney. No resistance was in Waring’s face, now fast assuming the patience of utter defeat. The President steeled himself against it, and, suddenly resentful of his own weakness, began a conversation on bookbindings. He detained the young man for another half-hour, showing him his

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treasures, touching them as a mother touches golden baby hair, or a lover a rose given him by his mistress. Waring looked at the sumptuous things and listened to the voice caressing them as it described them, but his own comments were few. As soon as he could he took his departure, saying farewell with no further allusion to the uppermost subject.

He went directly to his rooms in the ex-President's house and sat down at his desk. A little more than two months remained to him—then what? Ambition had become so thoroughly identified with Hallworth that disassociate the University from it and nothing was left. What to him now was success in the great, feverish city, offering its inhabitants many wonders, but rarely failing to take its toll from them of vital force. Its commercial ideals, its presto movement, its crowds, its continual concert pitch, he shrank from it all in a new, strange fear. Closing his eyes, he saw the long sky-line, serrated with giant buildings dwarfing church towers; the great wharves, where the greyhounds were chained; the harbor thronged with sails, with screaming tugs; the curve of the huge bridge suspended above racing and meeting currents. He saw the sun sink behind the Jersey shore, and one by one the lights come out in the tall buildings, and night, a city night, full of mystery, of restless pain and pleasure, descend unquietly. He saw himself working late in some Park Row office, leaving at last to go—where? The great city offered no home—without her. Homeless, and with his dearest ambitions taken from him, what could New York be to him but a place haunted with the strife of tongues?



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He took a sheet of paper and began a letter to her, tore it up and began again.

“DEAR MRS. PENFOLD:

“I am to leave Hallworth, not by my will, but because the President requests my resignation. My presence at the mass-meeting against Rebbor’s trusteeship clinched the matter.

“I pray that you will grant me the favor and honor of a word with you before I go; that is, if I have not forfeited all right to such kindness on your part. Be merciful. I shall have other punishments.

“As soon as the University closes I shall go to New York, to work there in some way. Must I go in despair?

“Faithfully yours,                      RICHARD WARING.”

He sealed and addressed this, then, bowed down by his thoughts, he sat for a long time motionless, his head resting on the desk. There Dutton found him, coming in to learn the truth of a report already in circulation that Waring was to leave the University. He rose, startled as Dutton entered, the expression in his face confirming the news.

Dutton held out both hands.

“Dicky, this is hard lines. Why in thunder didn’t you take my advice?”

“Am I already an object of pity? How did you learn it so quickly?”

“Oh, nobody knows anything; but, of course, the less they know the more they talk.”

“Naturally. But it is true. I had an interview with the President this afternoon—not that I said much,” he



## THE FACE OF EXILE

added, with a smile; "he did the talking, after fortifying me with his best port."

"Was he cutting?" Dutton said, with a worried look.

"Not at all—suave as a diplomat—finished up by showing me his pet bindings."

"Richard, don't take it too much to heart. You'll come back to us again," Dutton said warmly.

"I don't see Hallworth clamoring for me in any near future."

"They will if you get famous down in your beloved New York."

Waring smiled.

"There are too many in Manhattan already with the same ambition."

"But you've made your reputation," Dutton urged.

"Dear fellow, if you knew New York, you'd know what was meant by a three months' memory—three weeks', rather. I'm a back number."

"You!" Dutton said, with incredulity.

"Yes—I! Don't talk any more about my wretched affairs. Tell me what you're up to. I have cigars here that Mephisto could have bribed Faust with."

Dutton's eyes lit up.

The two men settled themselves comfortably, and were soon enmeshed with faint blue smoke. All harsh outlines, whether of the spiritual or physical vision, became softened. A dreamy expression stole into Waring's eyes. Dutton looked as if he were thinking of Allaire.

At last he spoke.

"Did you know that Warren is considering an offer from Leland Stanford?"

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"No, is he? I hope to goodness he'll accept it for your sake."

Dutton looked wistful, eager, discouraged, anxious, all at once.

"Do you think there's any chance of Hunt's giving me his post? There are so many strong outside men."

"You've got to have it. I'll make it my dying request to the President," Waring said grimly.

"Think what depends on it. Why—why if I got it I could—get married."

A shadow crossed Waring's face.

"You're going to be confoundedly happy," he said.

Dutton nodded, and blew a beatific ring of smoke. Waring put his cigar down as if the soul had gone out of it. He rose and paced the floor, then pausing, stood back of Dutton, putting both hands on his shoulders.

"Paul," he said quietly, "we'll work for that professorship. I know four distinct wires I can pull."

"Will you be my best man?"

"I'll do everything—but go to the wedding!"

## CHAPTER LV.

### OTHER LIVES.

ELIZABETH'S funeral over, and her people departed, the thoughts which had been held down by a weight of responsibility, again came to the surface of Barbara's mind. Though Clyde was still her guest, his unobtrusive manner of life made all too few demands upon her. He lived with the dead, not the living, having about him all the gentleness of those preoccupied. She scarcely knew he was in the house.

Waring's letter had caused her keen anguish. It was one thing to bid him go—another to have him taken from her. Yet she knew that in the light of her final decision, no other course, voluntary or involuntary, was possible. The hour had come for the surgeon's knife.

Now that she had refused to be divorced, by the very nature of all decisions the ghost of her rejection of this exit haunted her. She asked herself why. Was it for some dim idea of duty; some sub-conscious principle which years of renouncing would perhaps evoke and clarify? Was it self-respect? Was it cowardice? Was it a pitying protection for a harmless life so perfectly at her mercy? Was it all these things combined? She scarcely knew, having acted throughout more by instinct than in recognition of a well-understood law.

Often these days she looked at her crucifix. Perceval had promised her suffering. Well, at least she had that. But the law for which she suffered, what was it? Did the gods, ravished with jealousy of that sweet, strange

## THE LAW OF LIFE

human love, set up invisible barriers—death, pain, duty, labor to drive men into the loneliest way—the way that led to them? Or was it a law of human society to protect the greatest number, though hearts broke?

One morning these questions, childless of answers, became unendurable. She went to her husband's study.

"Amos," she said, without preliminary speech, "you promised me work. Can I begin to-day?"

Her husband looked puzzled for a moment; then remembered his promise to her.

"Would you really like to do something for me?"

"More than I can say. Have you anything to copy?"

"Not this morning. But I wish you'd sort these letters, see which need answering immediately. After that, if you care to, search this drawer for an envelope marked with the number 3001. I've mislaid it and it contains valuable notes."

She went to work as he bade her. He bent over his desk again. An hour passed in silence. Then he looked up.

"You've heard, of course, that Richard has to leave. It's ten thousand pities. I wish he'd kept out of this scrape."

"I suppose he had to do what he thought was right," she said dully.

"His first duty was to his work," her husband said, with some asperity. "I've lost a brilliant mathematician, and where I'll find his like I don't know. Hunt was hasty in asking for his resignation."

"Let me be your assistant," Barbara said, with a faint smile.

"I wish you could, child. But if I'm not mistaken

## OTHER LIVES

there's only one great woman mathematician on record, the Russian, Sonia Kovalevsky—and when she remembered she was a woman it was all up with her work!"

"What was the matter?"

"She fell in love, I believe," Dr. Penfold said.

Barbara sighed.

"What became of her?"

"She died young."

Barbara sighed again.

He went to his lecture at eleven, leaving her surrounded by papers. A few moments later Mehitabel announced Allaire.

"Have you heard the latest news?" she said, by way of greeting.

"No, dear, what?"

"The students have sent a monster petition to the President asking him that Rebbor be deposed and Mr. Waring be reinstated. Isn't it youthful and pathetic?"

Barbara drew her brows together.

"I know Mr. Waring will not like that."

"Of course not. He just hates it. I had a talk with him this morning in the stacks, where I was after the most frivolous novel I could find. He's done all he can to muzzle the youngsters, but they know his resignation was asked for, and now they're just between his feet like puppies. He simply treads on freshmen, and he looks bored."

"Naturally," Barbara said, with the ghost of a smile.

"O, Richard, O mon roi!" Allaire murmured. She never respected the report that Mrs. Penfold was in love with Waring, and in consequence Barbara felt more



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at ease with her than if she were always avoiding his name.

"He's several kinds of a duck," she went on. "Told Paul he'd pull wires for him to get Dr. Warren's chair."

"Is Dr. Warren leaving?"

"For Leland Stanford."

"I do hope Mr. Dutton will get the chair," Barbara said earnestly.

"If he does it will mean that we can get a few domestic ones and some spoons and forks."

Barbara leaned over and kissed Allaire's cheek.

"Have you heard that Mr. Perceval goes to New York in June?" Allaire asked.

"Yes."

"What grudge have so many nice people against this place that they're all fleeing to that impossible city?"

"Who—who besides the—two we know of?" Barbara questioned.

"Your Emperor."

"Oh, yes, Helena. She gets her doctorate in June."

"An imperious and inscrutable lady. But she's all right."

"Quite all right," Barbara said.

She was wondering if there was any way in which she could advance Dutton's interests. So far her role in the life of Hallworth had been purely social. Partly from her absorption in Waring, partly from her child-like distrust of her own powers, it had never occurred to her that she might have influence in the official life of the University. Yet Perdita had such influence; wielded, it is true, in a silent and subtle manner,

## OTHER LIVES

between waves of a fan or over a demi-tasse, but still—effective, far-reaching.

She might give a little dinner to the President and invite Dutton, or she might see Mrs. Maturin and Perdita, and ask their good offices. She decided that she would first see them.

That afternoon she went to Mrs. Maturin's. From her first introduction to it she had always loved this house, sacred through all its graciousness of hospitality to a lost hope and a lost desire. "*Resurrexi, et adhuc tecum sum*" might have been written above its portals, so haunted was it by a Presence, of which its chatelaine at least was always aware. In the years to come this persistent devotion might take on the character of eccentricity, but Barbara was too young to foresee this.

Mrs. Maturin at her desk in the library welcomed her with flattering informality. Barbara went at once to her subject. She began by speaking of Dutton's faithful work in the University, of his noble and sincere character, of his engagement with Allaire, and of what a full professorship would mean to the two, ending by a plea for Mrs. Maturin's support.

"I don't know what you can do, but if the subject was ever broached, you'd speak a good word for him?"

Mrs. Maturin looked at her curiously. Barbara's delicate face was alight with earnestness; its marks of suffering half-fading in this ardor of enthusiasm. She had not closely watched this younger woman for the last year not to know now that the intensity she displayed was rebound from the facing of dread issues. That she was trying to forget something was evident, her effort to

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remember other interests and other lives having its own element of strain and suffering.

“Speak a word for him! A hundred if they give me the chance. Hallworth has need of something more than scholarship—and Paul Dutton’s a good man.”

“Don’t you think—that—that the personal character counts in an institution?”

“More than scholarship, I should say. We’re all bound up together.”

Barbara nodded—paused—then thought aloud.

“I wish we were not. It’s so comfortless—living for society—for the race. Do you not think so?”

“Do you know those lines of George Meredith? ‘Not till the fire is dying in the grate look we for any kinship with the stars.’ I think that sums it up. I don’t think we do live with the social ideal uppermost until the hearth is cold.”

Barbara shivered.

“I prefer the hearth fire. I’m not big enough for the other.”

Mrs. Maturin said nothing, knowing from bitter experience how empty membership in the choir invisible leaves the heart.

The talk drifted to other subjects.

As Barbara rose to go the President was announced.

During these past few days the august head of Hallworth had seemed to her an instrument in the hands of the gods. She trembled now as she took his hand, suddenly resentful of him in every fiber of her being.

He looked down at her, and in a dim way understood what was in her eyes. Even he, protected by age and sex and monumental scholarship, had not wholly

## OTHER LIVES

escaped the spell of Mr. Richard Waring's chivalry. This little thing——!

"I hope you are well," he said kindly. "And Dr. Penfold?"

"Very well, thank you," she said in a low voice, but did not meet his glance.

After she had gone he went to a bookcase, pulled down an anthology of modern verse, and turned over the leaves.

"Are you looking at something in particular?"

"Yes—a bit of modern verse I once saw, and which to my amazement remained—a line or two of it—in my memory."

"What was it?" she asked.

"Just a little sentimental bit. I don't recall but two lines of it."

"What were they?"

"God gave them youth, God gave them love,  
And even God can give no more."

Barbara meanwhile had gone to Perdita's. In the little drawing-room she found not only her hostess but Mrs. Joyce, who had a curiously conscious air, as if caught in gossip. But Perdita gave her a warm and spontaneous welcome.

"Mrs. Penfold," Mrs. Joyce said, with the manner of one who talks to divert suspicion, "I have accomplished the impossible. I waylaid Dr. Penfold on the campus this morning, and made him consent to come to a stag dinner Herbert will give next week. He received his invitation yesterday, so you see I lost no time. How did I do it? He may tell you I pestered him, but I

## THE LAW OF LIFE

really only flattered him. Oh, I know them, these scholars! They're going to have a heavenly dinner—the wretches—while I wrestle with the cook, and I've given permission for them to smoke all over the house afterward. And all I've asked for in return is a spring hat! What do you think Herbert said when I proffered this simple request?"

Barbara laughed.

"What did he say?"

"That no hat would fit my halo! That's all they think halos are good for—to save millinery bills."

She went off in the midst of her sparkle, kissing her hand to Perdita, and nodding brightly to Mrs. Penfold. Left alone, the two women looked into each other's eyes and smiled.

Barbara told her errand.

"Dear old Dutton!" Perdita said; "indeed he must have it! It's imperative. I'll do all I can."

She studied Barbara's wistful face, wondering how the news of Waring's forced resignation affected her.

"She was too young," she thought, "to have had all this."

Barbara went away with her promise. It was beginning to seem as if two people in the world at least were to be happy.

She went home with the purpose of answering Waring's letter. She had the strange feeling that she must put all her earthly affairs in order, like those who expect death. She waited until late. Some letters are written more easily at midnight than in the glare of day.



## OTHER LIVES

“You ask me,” she began abruptly and without greeting, “if you can see me again. I do not know what good it will do, but you are going away—I want to say good-by—to tell you——” her pen stopped—“to ask you to forgive me what pain I may have caused you. You were noble to do as you did at the meeting—you go away in honor—and I think that more awaits you in New York. I pray so. I will see you again—but not until June—until the last moment. It will be easier so.”

She signed her initials. Afterward she wrote a little note to Perceval asking him if she might keep the crucifix.

## CHAPTER LVI.

### A DISSOLVING WORLD.

DURING the next six weeks Barbara and her husband were more closely associated in their daily life than they had been since their marriage. Divining in her some hidden need of distraction, though too closely wedded to his preconceived ideal of her to discern even remotely the truth, he did all in his power to supply her with work, often at a cost of his own time and labor. Barbara's very presence in the study meant a sacrifice on Dr. Penfold's part. Unless a person was, like Waring, nearly on his own plane of mathematical achievement, he worked better in perfect solitude, in an atmosphere undisturbed by another's limitations. Barbara, thinking only of drowning sorrow, did not at first perceive this; but after a while it became evident to her that what she did could be of little service to her husband. Another exit was closing in her face.

They were alone again, Clyde having returned to his fraternity. Life had settled back into an even groove, which promised to stretch into endless years.

Change that was never to be hers, she thought, was busy in the little world outside the house. She was discovering, not only through her supreme experience but through the very organization of a university, that to live in it was to be trained to partings. Your heart could break but once, but that over-strain must inevitably make you sensitive to farewells.

## A DISSOLVING WORLD

Waring was to go. The President with much courtesy had refused the students' petition.

The Emperor was making ready for her leaving. During these weeks she saw little of Barbara, partly because the examination for her doctorate was close upon her; partly because of her desire to lessen for herself the hurt of the final separation.

Dutton had obtained his coveted post, though just who was responsible for the President's decision Barbara did not know. Whatever the processes, the fact of his and Allaire's happiness seemed assured. The wedding was to take place in July.

Perceval was going to New York, despite the efforts of St. Jude's to keep him. His giving up this old and rich parish in a university town for a city mission seemed inexplicable to his parishioners and friends. Mrs. Maturin alone understood.

Barbara felt as if her world were dissolving, but with desperate energy she kept at work; seeking as many interests as she could, in her husband's study, in the management of her house, in such social functions as she could attend without danger of meeting Waring. Indeed, this danger scarcely existed, for since handing in his resignation he had refused all invitations, limiting his social intercourse to farewell calls. Though he came several times to see Dr. Penfold, he did not ask for her. This literal obedience to her request that their final interview should be on the eve of his departure at once pleased and hurt her.

The class of which she had been a member in its freshman year was graduating, and at the beginning of June she gave a reception, at which its president, the

## THE LAW OF LIFE

Boy, was the guest of honor. Remembering that long-ago reception, where he gallantly sacrificed the full joys of supper for her sake, she planned a feast that in variety and quality was remarkable, even in a week of feasting. The Boy took her out to the supper-room, and she was gay with him, as one should be with the president of the senior class full of his honors, yet winning and deferential. He parted from her that night with youthful expressions of the pleasure she had given to them all; and at the last in a burst of confidence he told her that much of his gaiety was assumed, at heart he was very blue. He had not realized how much he loved Hallworth until the wrench of parting came.

After the last guest was gone, she went up-stairs, where her husband was already settling down to work. It was a hot night, and though the windows stood wide open, the air of the study seemed close.

"Amos, there's some ice-cream left," she said. "Shall I bring you a little?"

"No, my dear; but I should like another cup of that delicious coffee. I don't want to fall asleep at my desk as I did last night."

She brought it to him, then sat down near him, looking, in her white gown, pale and fagged.

"My dear, was it a success? I hope you did not work too hard."

"They seemed to enjoy themselves—and the supper was good—I know they enjoyed that."

Dr. Penfold sipped his coffee with pleased deliberation. Barbara, watching him, wanted to ask him if her growing suspicion were correct, if she really hindered rather than helped him by her work in the study. But

## A DISSOLVING WORLD

she held back from the question. She would simply let the work drop, she thought.

As he put down his cup he gave a little sigh of satisfaction.

"That was good. By the way, my dear, I have not told you of an honor which has been bestowed upon me. The notification came this morning. I have been made a member of the Institute of France."

Her face lighted up.

"Of the Institute of France!"

"Yes; a member of the Academie des Sciences."

"That's a great honor, isn't it?"

"I believe it is a great honor. There are only eight foreign members."

"And now you are one of those eight."

"Yes."

"I am very proud of you," she said in a low voice.

He looked at her with a certain wistfulness, propping his massive brow on his thin yellow hand.

"Perhaps it repays you a little for your sacrifices in my behalf."

"I don't know what they are. I have done nothing," she answered.

"You've done much. You've been patient and forbearing. I know I'm not an easy man to live with, but you've never made that knowledge clearer."

She rose and went to the window and looked out for a moment upon the campus.

"And would you miss me if I were not here?"

"Miss you!"

There was a moment's silence. Dr. Penfold fingered the document which had conveyed to him the news of



## THE LAW OF LIFE

his election to the Institute. He had brought it out for Barbara to read.

He called her from the window, and she went and bent over it, translating it prettily, giving full value to its intricate courtesy of expression. He listened, watching her face with a pride new to him. When she had finished he said timidly:

“My dear, do you know what honors like these sometimes make me wish for?”

“For what?” she asked.

“For a son to bear my name.”

## CHAPTER LVII.

### THE LAW OF LIFE.

COMMENCEMENT week came, bringing with it its peculiar festivities, its atmosphere of gaiety, not unmingled with regret and sadness. To those who year in and year out have watched youth say farewell to Alma Mater, the spectacle increases rather than decreases in the force of its appeal to the emotions. The children of the University, standing between two worlds, know at last that one was a world of many enchantments, and, for all its obligations of labor, essentially theirs to rule with the sweet tyrannies of confident youth. They had reigned for four years in this little city, where no one questioned their genius, their beauty, their brave ambitions, where all things were possible because still in the future. With the skeptical, cynical world outside they had nothing to do. It was not in their kingdom.

Now, through all the stateliness of academic ceremony, they felt the pain of dethronement. The proudest of them knew that the pulse of that other world would not beat the quicker for their entrance into it; nay, their entrance would not be even observed. For four years they had officered this city of youth under the flag of class colors, University colors, surrendering to no man; now the brave little garrison was to be dispersed in a world ignorant of its achievements and careless of its hopes.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

Barbara went to commencement, and saw Waring, in his academic gown and hood of a doctor of science, go up with the Faculty for the last time. She was near enough to watch his face. Gray and worn as it was, the sight of it unnerved her. Through a mist she saw the long procession file in, the members of the senior class in cap and gown, some grave, some gay, all with an air of importance. The band played "The Honeysuckle and the Bee." Outside the hot June sunshine—commencement day was always hot—beat down upon the campus. The exercises began. The degrees were distributed. The Emperor, tall and stately in her black gown, went up to get her doctorate. After this ceremony was over Barbara slipped out, unable longer to bear the pressure of her emotions.

She wondered if Waring would go away without seeing her, but the afternoon mail brought her a note from him and one from the Emperor.

His read:

"I leave the day after to-morrow. May I see you to-morrow afternoon? Perhaps take a little walk with you? Do not refuse me."

No, she would not refuse him. She had no will to refuse him.

She opened the Emperor's note.

"Good-by," it ran; "I leave on the early train for New York. I am sparing myself in not seeing you. You have done well for such a little girl. I'm not sure of many things in this amazing world, Barbara, but this at least I am sure of, that the fair gods will receive you into their company at the ending of the show."

## THE LAW OF LIFE

"Me, I'm going to study law, a tough subject, dear, but one worthy of an Emperor.

"Good-by. We understand!"

Barbara smiled through her tears over this characteristic farewell.

"I must see her," she thought.

So the early morning found her at the little station across the valley where so many of the children of Hallworth had come and gone. The Emperor was there, pale in the morning light, with something of the departed darkness in her eyes. The night and its thousand stars, its mystery and its loneliness, had always seemed to Barbara to symbolize this girl.

"I had to see you," Barbara said.

"You were good to come down at this ungodly hour, but I don't like good-bys."

"Nor I—but I had to see you."

They had little to say to each other. They stood with hands tightly clasped, looking across the valley toward Hallworth.

"Do you know," Barbara said, "that in all our acquaintance you have never kissed me?"

The familiar smile, with its touch of self-mockery, flitted a moment across the Emperor's face. She stooped and kissed her.

"It was not that I didn't care."

Barbara looked wistful.

"I can't say many things. You know I love you."

The Emperor turned away her head.

The train backed into the station, and she went up on the platform of the last car. As she stood there her

## THE LAW OF LIFE

gallant bearing returned to her. She waved her hand, her dark eyes full of the old strange light, the delicate mockery about her lips.

Barbara winked back her tears.

"Vive l'Empereur!" she cried in farewell, as the train drew out.

That afternoon at three Waring was announced. After their formal greeting, he asked her if she would walk with him out the forest road. She assented gravely. Both had a solemnity of manner which told either of the ending of an emotional experience or of the hope of some great solution.

They went into the heavy June sunshine, crossing the campus almost in silence. Soon the familiar road opened before them, arched with forest trees, the foot-path beside it worn smooth and white with the passage of many feet, some leaving it that day never more to return.

"You are going straight to New York?" Barbara asked.

"On the five o'clock train to-morrow afternoon."

"And what do you intend doing there?"

"I shall be on my old paper again—on the editorial staff."

"And—and are you giving up the academic life altogether?"

"I think so. I cannot return to Hallworth, and I have no heart to go to any other university."

The quiet sadness of his voice stirred her more deeply than passionate pleading could have done.

"Do you go away forgiving me?" she said in low tones.



## THE LAW OF LIFE

He suddenly stopped in the path.

"Barbara, is there no hope?"

She could not answer. Love and longing tore her.  
Her soul bled.

"Is there no hope?" he repeated.

"I can't hurt him," she said.

"But me?"

She was silent.

He looked at her gently, almost with compassion.

"If you were older you would see things in a different light," he said. "You would not only know to whom you belonged, but you would act upon that knowledge."

"Don't turn the knife?" she said.

"Does it hurt you?" he said bitterly.

"It hurts me."

"I should like to know your theories of life—what impossible ideal compels you to this sacrifice! I tell you honestly that I think you are acting as a child rather than a woman. What is your theory, Barbara?"

"I have none," she said in a low voice.

"Your ideal, then?"

She shook her head.

"Have you any clear grounds for your course?" he urged.

"No. I have nothing—nothing. I can't hurt him, that's all I know."

"But would it hurt him?"

"It would hurt him."

They walked along in silence.

"There's no hope, then?" he said at last.

## THE LAW OF LIFE

"None," she faltered.

"Shall we turn back?"

He was gone. They had shaken hands at her door, as two strangers might. She went up-stairs, facing emptiness.

The next day at five she went to the knoll. From it the trains could be seen winding out of the valley.

She saw the train which bore him from her leave the station, make its way across the valley, slowly climb the steep grade by which it obtained exit through the hills. After a while she could only trace its course by the trail of white smoke. At last even this faded from the heavy air.

Misery assailed her, though no tears came to her eyes, no word of woe from her lips. For a long time she sat motionless. Nothing remained but to cling with blind instinct to that dim law which upon the forest road she had found herself powerless to define to him.

Six o'clock struck. The chimes began to ring. She raised her head from her hands, looking now not toward the valley, but in the direction where, at the summit of a hill, steep and difficult, the towers of Hallworth rose against the sky.

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**RETURN TO → CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT**  
**202 Main Library**

LOAN PERIOD 1	2	3
<b>HOME USE</b>		
4	5	6

**ALL BOOKS MAY BE RECALLED AFTER 7 DAYS**

1-month loans may be renewed by calling 642-3405

6-month loans may be recharged by bringing books to Circulation Desk

Renewals and recharges may be made 4 days prior to due date

**DUE AS STAMPED BELOW**

JUL 4 1982		
RET'D FEB 6 1982		
NOV 19 1982		
REC. CIR JUN 15 1982		
SENT ON ILL		
JUN 28 2002		
U. C. BERKELEY		

YB 39823

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

